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Contents

126 Up to the Mountain

Cuzco, Peru, is the town that Machu Picchu built, a home base for the site's hundreds of thousands of yearly visitors (and counting). Now the city is booming, bringing together past glories and future possibilities to create a kind of modern Incan marvel all its own.

BY ANDREW McCARTHY.
PHOTOGRAPHED BY
JESSE CHEHAK

134 Berlin Grows Up

The city of rakish charms and anything-is-possible artistic energy has lately taken on a new gloss—

without losing its cool.

ALEXANDRA MARSHALL visits Europe's bourgeois bohemian utopia.
PHOTOGRAPHED BY
BÄRBEL SCHMIDT

140 Out of the Blue

On a jungle-shrouded private island in Fiji, a reclusive billionaire has created what may be the world's most extravagant resort. Is Laucala for real?

PETER JON LINDBERG reports from a most improbable paradise. PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOHN LAURIE

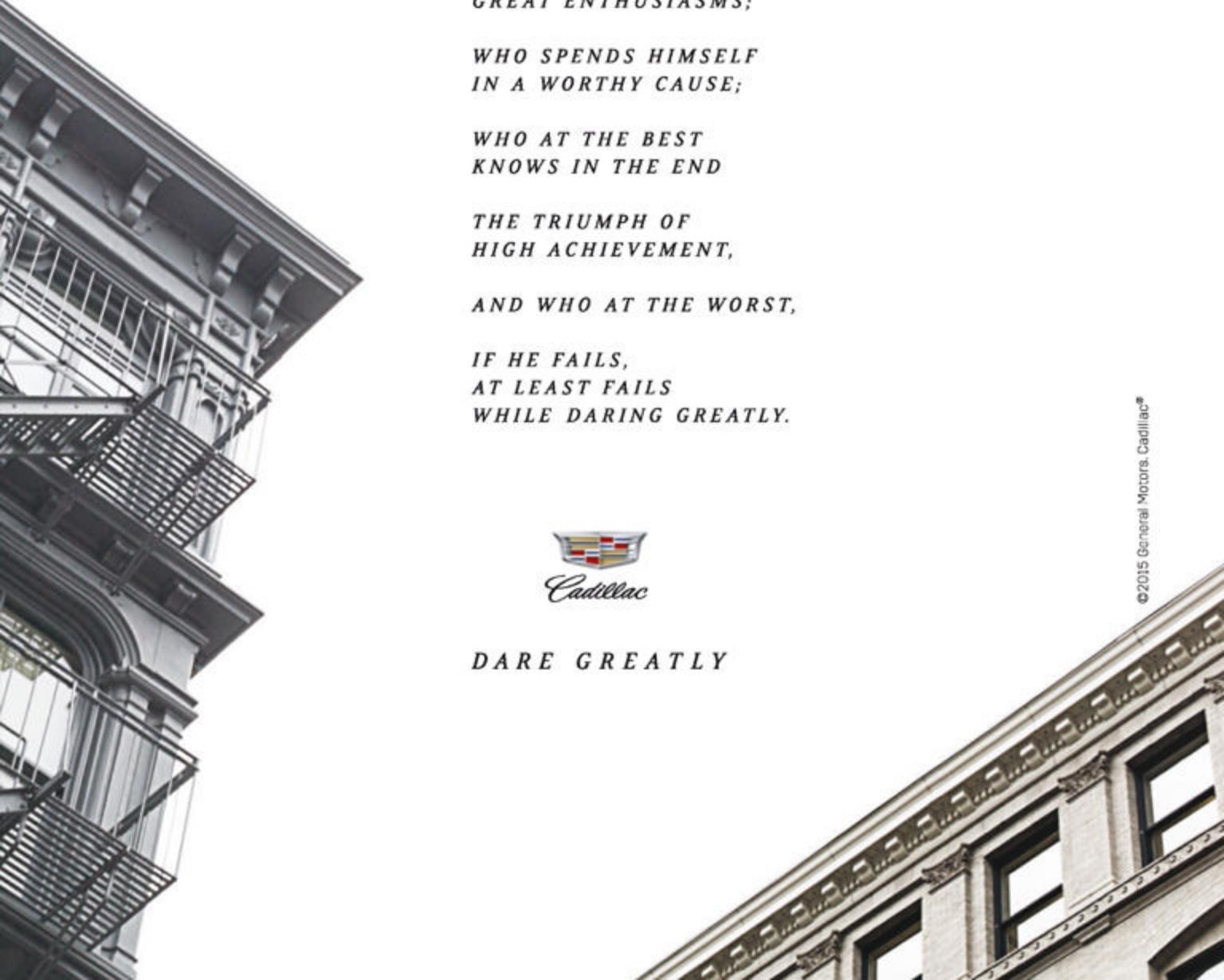
146 Capital Dining

Innovative chefs and bartenders—along with a wave of new residents—are shaking up Washington, D.C.'s restaurant scene, proving there's more to the Beltway than boring steak houses and stuffed shirts.

BY FRANCINE MAROUKIAN.
PHOTOGRAPHED BY
MARCUS NILSSON

Sailing the waters
near Laucala, a
Fijian island resort,
page 140.

JOHN LAURIE



*IT IS NOT THE CRITIC
WHO COUNTS;*

*THE CREDIT BELONGS
TO THE MAN WHO IS
ACTUALLY IN THE ARENA,*

WHO STRIVES VALIANTLY;

*WHO ERRS, WHO COMES
SHORT AGAIN AND AGAIN;*

*WHO KNOWS
GREAT ENTHUSIASMS;*

*WHO SPENDS HIMSELF
IN A WORTHY CAUSE;*

*WHO AT THE BEST
KNOWS IN THE END*

*THE TRIUMPH OF
HIGH ACHIEVEMENT,*

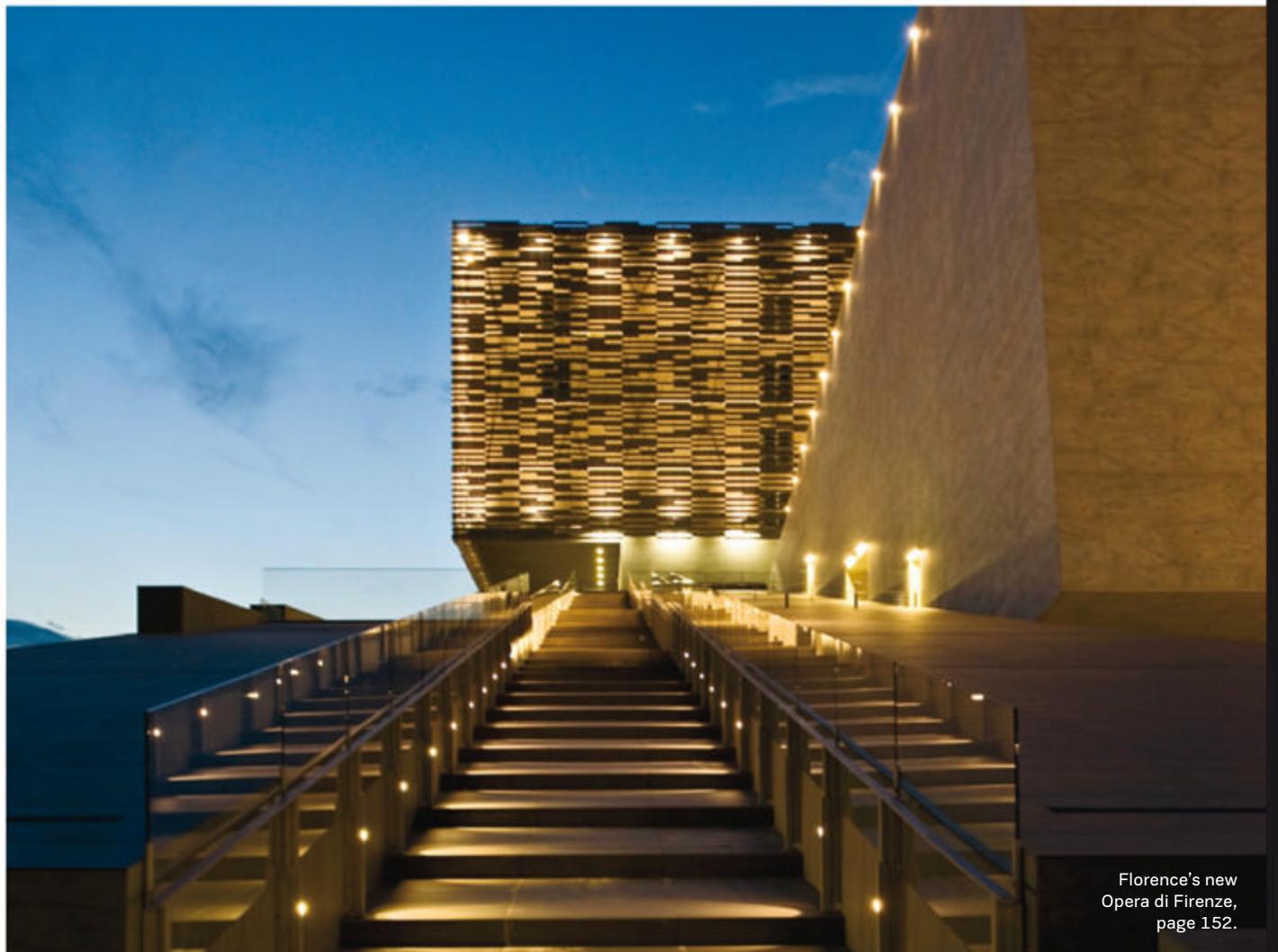
AND WHO AT THE WORST,

*IF HE FAILS,
AT LEAST FAILS
WHILE DARING GREATLY.*



DARE GREATLY

Contents



Florence's new
Opera di Firenze,
page 152.

- Radar**
29 News, Finds, Opinions, Obsessions
Next-generation hoteliers; four reasons to visit Riga, Latvia; luxe family-friendly retreats; know your cool hotel trends; travel-friendly handbags; and more.

Trip Doctor

- 65 Strategies**
From new wellness programming to partnerships with local gyms, hotel companies are making it easier than ever to

- stay fit on the road. We spotlight five ways you can reap the benefits.
82 The Fix
T+L Trip Doctor
AMY FARLEY on how to get VIP treatment at a hotel. **Plus** Sites and apps to help you save on your next room.
92 Deals
T+L reader exclusives.

- March Special**
99 The It List 2015
For our 10th annual editors' choice awards, we picked the 43 properties that are transforming their

destinations. See the full list of winners at tandl.me/itlist.

- Decoder**
152 Our Definitive Guide to Florence
Tagged
168 Shanghai

- In Every Issue**
T+L DIGITAL **10**
EDITOR'S NOTE **12**
CONTRIBUTORS **14**
IN BOX **18**

On the Cover A view of the lagoon pool at Laucala, a private-island resort in Fiji, page 140. Photographed by John Laurie.

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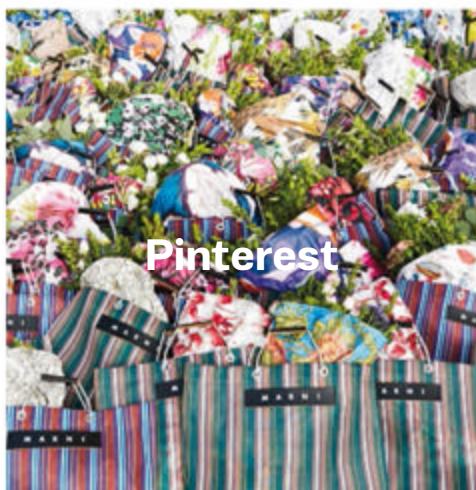
It List

We've chosen the 43 most game-changing new hotels of the year (including London's Ham Yard, above). See the top 11 picks, starting on page 99, and get the rest—plus more pictures—at tandl.me/itlist.



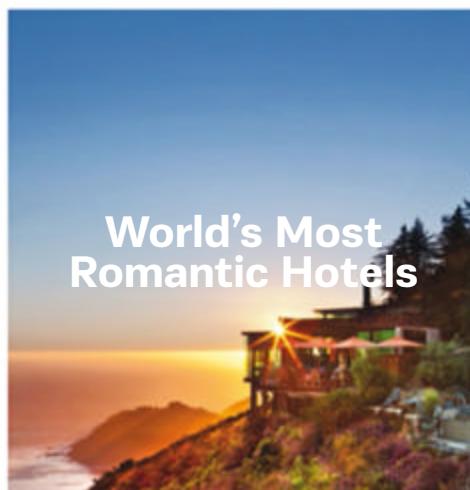
Instagram

Share how you're making the most of the season, and be sure to include the hashtag **#TLPicks** (as @brkny did with this image from Kyoto, Japan) for a chance to be featured by *Travel + Leisure*.



Pinterest

Now that your parkas and mittens are stashed away, find out what you should be wearing and carrying from style director Jane Bishop (maybe something from Marni's floral spring collection): tandl.me/spring15.



World's Most Romantic Hotels

If spring fever has you in the mood for romance, we've got hotels that are perfect for a tryst (among them Big Sur's Post Ranch Inn, above) at tandl.me/romhot.



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Nathan Lump

JUST BEFORE STARTING AT T+L LAST FALL, I found myself with an entire week off. My first thought: Where could I go? I knew I wanted to leave the country, but I would need to be at my best upon return (so, no jet lag). I also had about 36 hours to put it all together.

My husband, Charles, had written a guidebook to Chile years ago and knows the country well, so he suggested it as an easy last-minute option. Flights run overnight and

there was only a one-hour time difference from New York. And, as anyone who knows me knows, I'm passionate about wine. This would be the perfect opportunity to educate myself about a wine region I'd wanted to know better.

I'm also a serious hotel junkie, and I'd had my eye on Viña Vik, which was just opening its doors in Chilean wine country. I knew Alexander and Carrie Vik's clutch of art-filled hotels in Uruguay, so I couldn't resist the chance to be one of the first guests at their new venture. That was the clincher. Off we went to Chile.

Wine-country hotels the world over tend to follow a few familiar themes—intimate scale, lots of stone and rough-hewn beams, expansive views, good food—and if they often deliver a high degree of comfort, they also rarely offer many surprises. Viña Vik was the opposite, from its curvilinear winery designed by Smiljan Radic to rooms that pursue an idea (say, an homage to Piero Fornasetti) down to the smallest detail. It felt original, refreshing, and what started as a whim became one of my most memorable trips of the year, all because of where we stayed.

It was a reminder that a great hotel can be a destination unto itself. Which is why every year for the It List (page 99), T+L selects a group of the world's most important new properties. Viña Vik is there, along with other standouts that provide not just a place to rest your head but an entire rationale to get on a plane and explore someplace new.



The winery at Viña Vik.

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The best-kept secrets are the ones we keep to ourselves. They're the moments that bring a knowing grin and sparkle to the eye. The secrets hidden among the British Virgin Islands are some of nature's best. Where every breeze offers a liberating aura of untucked luxury. And her 60 islands conceal majestic caves, secluded beaches, lush mountain trails, and fabled shipwrecks. These are everlasting moments. The ones you keep to yourself.



I THINK I'LL KEEP THIS TO MYSELF



Contributors



Jesse Chehak

—

Photographer

[Up to the Mountain](#)

page 126

Unforgettable moment while shooting in Cuzco, Peru I had a fantastic experience photographing a young girl with her lamb one afternoon on a street near the Plaza de Armas, the main square. Portraits are particularly difficult to coordinate in Peru—but in that instant, I felt connected to local life. **Your images of the city were full of...** Alpacas, cool hats, tour buses, steep and narrow roads, lots of schoolkids in uniform, and exceptionally good-looking street dogs. **Tastes you'd fly back for** Caldo de pollo—I love soup—and fresh vegetables from the outdoor markets. *Follow Jesse on Instagram at @lostsemiotics.*



Alastair Gordon

—

Author and critic

[High Anxiety](#)

page 60



Alexandra Marshall

—

Writer

[Berlin Grows Up](#)

page 134



Marcus Nilsson

—

Photographer

[Capital Dining](#)

page 146

You are critical of London's new buildings in your essay. What makes a skyline iconic? I'm a believer in what the Dutch call "messy vitality," those elements that make a city memorable. London's skyline, sadly, is getting overshadowed by architectural hubris. **Favorite London structure** The Lloyd's building, restored to its original 1986 high-tech glory, still looks wildly futuristic. **Architecture trend you love** Tokyo's tiny-house movement, where architects create miraculous homes on sliver lots. *Follow Alastair on Twitter at @lapmonkey.*

What's the best example of Berlin's transformation? Mädchenschule, a converted Bauhaus Jewish girls' school in Mitte, which is today filled with fantastic galleries and restaurants including local favorite Pauly Saal. **Biggest trip regret** That I didn't have refrigerated luggage for smuggling sausages home from the famous department store KaDeWe. **Don't leave Berlin without...** Going to a beer garden. It's a German cliché, but a great one. I loved Prater, where I ordered a schnitzel and a dark beer. *Follow Alexandra on Twitter at @AlexMAbroad.*

Did you try any of the D.C. restaurants you photographed?

I've been to several Spanish restaurants, and my favorite by far is Estadio. It feels like a proper Madrid tapas den. And the ramen noodles from Toki Underground were unbelievable. **Travel plans** This spring I plan to rebuild an old Harley-Davidson in preparation for a long motorcycle road trip around the U.S. in the summer. **What's next?** A cookbook with chef Ignacio Mattos, of Estela, in New York City. *Follow Marcus on Instagram at @pissinginthepunchbowl.*

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A close-up photograph of a ship's deck railing. The railing consists of a dark wooden board with white horizontal stripes and a blue-painted metal frame. In the background, there is a dark, textured surface, possibly the ocean or a large wave.

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I was elated to see Myanmar named “Destination of the Year” in your December issue. Experiencing that exceptionally beautiful and culturally complex country is a must for any serious traveler. —*Michelle Jensen, BOSTON*

#Chatter

T+L Twitter followers share their favorite drinks around the world.

“There’s a pickled beet martini at **Toups’ Meatery** (toupsmeatery.com) I pine for between visits to New Orleans.” —@KITTENWITHAWHIP

“Went on a mai tai crawl while rediscovering my home, #Oahu. Who knew you could drink so cheaply by the beach?” —@KEANEISCOOL

“Love the Verbena at the **Chandelier** (cosmopolitanlasvegas.com) bar in Vegas. Its ‘buzz button’ does a number on your taste buds.” —@SPENCERSPELLMAN

“Is there anything more refreshing than real coconut milk from a tree in the Caribbean?” —@JESSISAWANDERER

“One sip of my fiancé’s Bacon Old Fashion at Nashville’s **Patterson House** (pattersonhouse-nashville.com) triggered instant order envy.” —@CHALLEMANN

“I recently ordered a pisco sour in Lima, #Peru—if I’d had more than one, I might not have remembered it.” —@RACHJOURNALIST



Moved by Myanmar

Between driving my children to and from school and ballet lessons, I can seldom afford the luxury of absorbing every word of your magazine. After a rained-out vacation day on a much-needed holiday in Antigua, I suddenly found time to delve into your December issue. “This is Myanmar’s Moment” [by Andrew Solomon] stopped me in my tracks. I actually underlined passages to bring home for my teenager to appreciate the beautifully written prose. The times are few and far between when the soul of

this carpooling mother is so inspired. Well done. —*Jenny Thomas-Jones, REDDING, CALIF.*

Lost in Morocco

Your story on Fez, Morocco, in “The Best Places to Go in 2015” [by Richard Alleman, January] failed to mention the Fes Festival of World Sacred Music (fesfestival.com), which celebrated its 20th anniversary last June. The event is by far the most significant factor involved in raising the city’s international profile as a tourist destination. —*Travelandleisure.com member maryfinnigan*

SOUNDING OFF

Any list that aims to identify the next great destinations on the travel map is sure to be hotly contested, and readers were quick to share their opinions about travelandleisure.com’s slideshow of the “Best Places to Travel in 2015.” From Malta to the Catskills, many were pleased

that their hometowns made the cut, while a few called out their next dream vacation. Cleveland—a struggling city on the rise—sparked the most debate. Some angry critics dismissed its inclusion, while others appreciated the recognition.

Another popular topic: Cuba, thanks to newly loosened travel regulations. Overall, most shared @ROMoxieMa’s sentiment: “I’d like to check out all of the #BestPlaces2015!”

For our full list of the Best Places to Go in 2015, visit tandl.me/trvl15.

“This is a spectacular list. Malmö, here we come!” —@JEFFV216

“No one is buying that Cleveland is a place to go, no matter how much you or LeBron may try to sell us on the idea.” —@RISELDARUIZ

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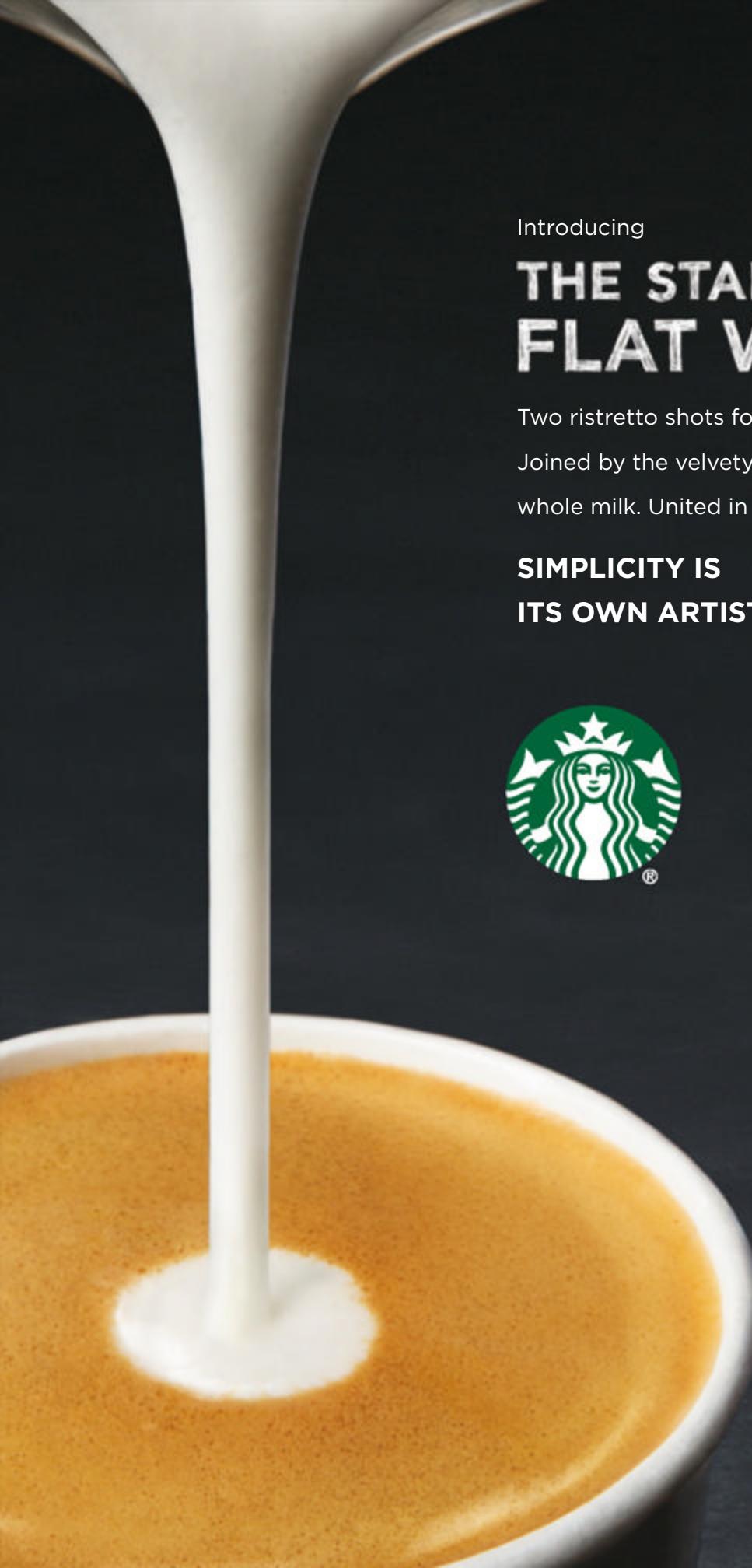
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The Lobby mixes ingeniously with the concept bar, where you can enjoy a sophisticated atmosphere and an unparalleled selection of more than 300 brands of the best whiskeys, wines, tequilas and mezcals. Additionally, Live restaurant features artisanal interpretations of modern Mexican cuisine, in an avant-garde architectural setting.

The meetings and events space is deftly designed and perfectly adept for an event where elegance and sophistication are requisites. The Aqua Gran Salon Ballroom features flexible space and capacity for up to 1,000 guests, and the truly remarkable Business and Technology Center offers state-of-the-art technology and a refined work space.



RELAX AT THE NEWLY OPENED SPA

As the perfect place for guests to retreat from the urban fast-paced lifestyle, the hotel launched "Feel Urban Day Spa by Aqua" in 2014 – on its first anniversary. It combines the best of Mexico and the world, in order to offer a unique menu consisting of nine different massage options, and eight different body treatments.

Whichever the nature of the stay may be, there is no question that Live Aqua Mexico City Hotel & Spa can illustrate just how a visit to Mexico City should be done, and done the proper way.

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fresh painted fences, wild game, a restored 1968 Chevelle,
the innocence of childhood, the complete works of Jean Luc Godard, and just a hint of smoke.
I think I'm starting to get the hang of this tasting thing.

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Radar

News. Finds. Opinions. Obsessions.

HOTELS

WARMER WELCOMES

There's a new breed of innkeepers on the scene, for whom it's not enough to provide just a nice room and a cool lobby. Drawing on their cultural credentials and connections, they're creating intimate spaces that blur the line between B&B and neighborhood clubhouse. Who needs a concierge's tips when the fashion crowd is in the living room and the local chef's pop-up is in the backyard? Meet the next generation of millennial-centric, experience-driven microhotels.

Urban Cowboy, **Brooklyn, New York**

Former pro hockey player Lyon Porter imagined Urban Cowboy as a kind of rebooted B&B—one that provides “that welcoming feeling, that insider knowledge, that energy,” →



Lyon Porter at the Urban Cowboy, his B&B in Brooklyn, New York.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MACKENZIE STROH

 Meet other members of the next generation of innkeepers at tandl.me/hipinns.



↑ The living room at Urban Cowboy.

he says. Tucked into a residential area of Williamsburg, the hotel, which opened last year, has four rooms and a backyard cabin that evoke the Adirondacks with their rough-hewn joists, potbellied stoves—even an antler chandelier. The den has quickly become a social hub, where a chef from Brooklyn hot spot Five Leaves might drop by to make dinner while a local band provides the soundtrack. And like any gracious host, Porter puts out a formidable spread on the farm table every morning, all from local purveyors: White Mustache yogurt, jams from Blackman Orchards, and Blue Bottle coffee. urbancowboybnb.com. \$\$

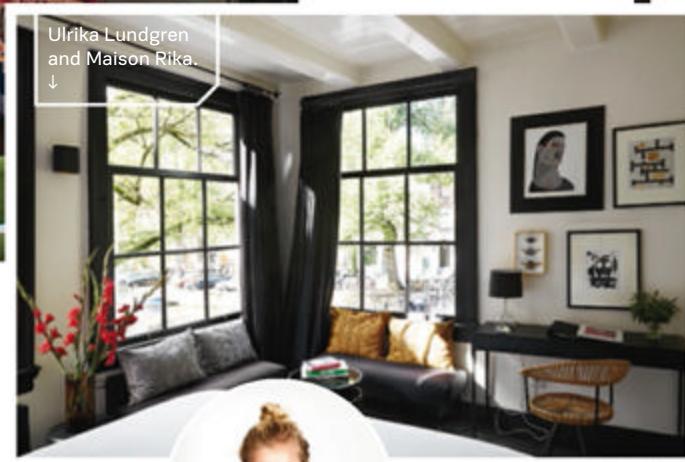
Maison Rika, Amsterdam

When you check in to the two-room Maison Rika, in the 9 Streets district, you're welcomed with a chic skull-and-star print canvas bag and a personalized guide to the city. "That's the way I treat someone who comes

to my home," says owner Ulrika Lundgren, designer of the cult fashion label Rika (Julianne Moore and Helena Christensen are fans). The line's girly rocker aesthetic finds expression at her guesthouse in a bold black-and-white palette softened by fuzzy throws and embroidered pillows. Downstairs, a concept store hosts trunk shows and street-art installations and sells accessories inspired by Lundgren's travels (Tom Wood jewelry from Norway, Ortigia Sicilia room spray). Though the designer has big plans for the brand—Tokyo and Scandinavia outposts are in the works—she's determined to stay small. "No more than five or six rooms, so they will always feel intimate." rikaint.com. \$\$\$

Artist Residence, England

In 2008, Justin Salisbury invited local artists to redecorate his family's run-down guesthouse in Brighton in exchange for a stay.

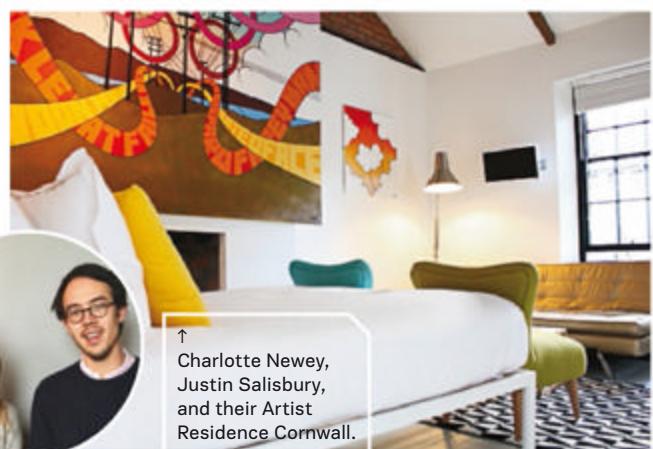


Ulrika Lundgren and Maison Rika.
↓

The result—all whimsical murals and kitschy throw pillows—was such a hit with guests that it led to two other hotels, one in Cornwall and the latest in the posh London neighborhood of Pimlico. The look of the latter has grown more sophisticated (sofas upholstered in Turkish kilims, copper lighting by London design firm Nud Collection), but Salisbury and fiancée

Charlotte Newey have stuck to their community-building mission. A belowground lounge draws a mixed crowd of foreign guests, magazine editors, and diplomats; a series of cocktail master classes is planned. "What makes a great hotel are the people—the guests and the staff that create that free-spirited, homey ambience," Salisbury says. artistresidence.co.uk. \$\$

—COLLEEN CLARK



↑ Charlotte Newey, Justin Salisbury, and their Artist Residence Cornwall.



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WHY GO

BELLE OF THE BALTIC

Riga is shedding its reputation as a weekend party town by luring Europe's art-and-culture set. Here, four reasons to visit the Latvian capital.

Because it has the world's best collection of Art Nouveau architecture.

Latvia's early-1900s industrial boom gave birth to hundreds of Jugendstil structures, many by architect Mikhail Eisenstein. **10B Elizabeth Street** (pictured) has the most impressive façade, with its white-on-blue goddesses and curling vines. **Alberta Street** is a parade of fantastical gargoyles, jungle animals, even robots. Get a map at the **Riga Art Nouveau Museum** (*jugendstils.riga.lv*) for a self-guided walking tour.

Because coffee is an art here. Five years ago all you could find was the add-water-

and-stir variety. Today baristas are pouring perfectly brewed lattes in creatively converted spaces. Our picks: **Miit** (*miit.lv*), a café and bike workshop, and the art-filled **Innocent Café** (*innocent.lv*).

Because it provides a fascinating lens on the country's rich past. Last year's European Capital of Culture designation unleashed a flood of funds that helped develop programs at the **National Library of Latvia** (*lnb.lv*) and the **Corner House** (*riga2014.org*), a museum in the former KGB headquarters that explores the brutal Soviet police system. Preservation efforts have also homed in on relics like the opulent Renaissance-style **Art Museum Riga**

Bourse (*rigasbirza.lv*), a national landmark.

Because today's Latvian cuisine is a refreshing departure from Soviet meat and potatoes.

Simple seafood dishes dominate, with a nod to the New Nordic ethos that's taken hold on the other side of the Baltic Sea. At **Vincent's** (*restorans.lv*; \$\$\$), fresh river fish is rubbed with butter, oil, and a dash of salt and served with handpicked mushrooms and berries.

Le Dome (*ledome.lv*; \$\$) sources from local farms and fishermen; don't miss the quark cheese with seared trout and caviar.

—BRANDON PRESSER



LOCFILE

INSIDERS' HONG KONG

How to navigate this fast-paced, 21st-century metropolis? Three movers and shakers reveal their go-to spots. By Jeninne Lee-St. John



Hong Kong's skyline, seen from Tsim Sha Tsui.

The Artist

Li Jiabo
Principal
dancer, Hong
Kong Ballet
Moved from
Shanghai
in 2003



WHAT'S UNDERRATED You always hear about Lan Kwai Fung or Soho, but there's a lot to explore in Tsim Sha Tsui, which has several stylish shops and Victoria Harbour views. You can't miss the **Hong Kong Space Museum** (hk.space.museum) and its cool white dome. **IN-TOWN ESCAPE** I love hitting the beach on Lamma Island, partly because there are no cars! I sometimes forget I'm in Hong Kong—it's that peaceful. **LOCAL ICON** The **Hong Kong String Orchestra** (stringorchestra.org.hk) was founded by Jue Yao, a violinist who, like me, spent her childhood in Shanghai studying her craft.



Noodle soup with goose leg at Yat Lok.



The Chef
Jowett Yu
Chef, Ho Lee
Fook restaurant
Moved from
Sydney a
year ago

QUINTESSENTIAL HONG KONG

BITE The goose leg *lai fun* from **Yat Lok** (852/2524-3882; \$) is crispy and aromatic. The grease seeps into the noodle soup, making it rich and delicious.

UP-AND-COMING RESTAURANT On a backstreet of Wan Chai Market, **Serge et le Phoque** (852/5465-2000; \$\$\$) specializes in French "bistronomy" and is

run by chef George Scott-Toft, who cooks with confidence and flair. **AFTER WORK, I'M USUALLY...** Playing darts and drinking bourbon at **White Horse** (852/3426-4818), a bar in Causeway Bay that stays open late. Canto-pop music blares through the speakers while nineties Chinese movies play on the big screen.

T+L Hong Kong is one of *T+L's Best Places to Travel in 2015*. See the others at tandl.me/bstplc15.



The Tastemaker

Joanna Gunn
Chief brand officer,
Lane Crawford
Moved from
London in 1997

FAVORITE HANGOUTS I love the cocktails at **Stockton** (stockton.com.hk), a cheeky old-world whiskey bar in Central. In Sai Ying Pun, **Ping Pong Gintoneria** (pingpong129.com) has a cool-friend's-basement vibe and serves the best gin and tonics in town. **HOTEL PICK** The **Pottinger** (thepottinger.com; \$\$) is a boutique hotel with a beautiful and subtle Chinese aesthetic, tucked away in the heart of the city.

WHERE TO SHOP Tai Ping Shan Street—green, relaxed, walkable—is lined with independent shops and studios. I often find myself at **Ellermann Flower Boutique** (ellermanndesign.com) nearby.

LAST GREAT MEAL I enjoyed the fish tacos, whole sea bass, and sweet-potato fries at Repulse Bay's newly opened **Limewood** (limewood.hk; \$\$). Go during the week, when it's quiet.



A suite at the Pottinger.

Hello Tomorrow



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A large background photograph shows a young girl with blonde hair laughing joyfully. In the foreground, the head and upper body of a penguin are visible, looking towards the camera.

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FAMILY

LET'S STAY TOGETHER

Five retreats around the world that prove just how luxe a trip with the kids can be.

A surfing lesson at Rancho Santana, in Nicaragua.



COURTESY OF THE INN AT RANCHO SANTANA

NICARAGUA If the country is the next

Costa Rica, then the **Inn at Rancho**

Santana (ranchosantana.com; **\$\$**) is its next great family getaway. The 2,700 acres along the Pacific coast offer plenty to keep the gang busy, like mountain biking, horseback riding, and surfing.

KENYA The typical safari gets a reboot at **Mara Bush Houses** (asiliaafrica.com; *all-inclusive; \$\$\$\$\$*), in the Masai Mara. Three private houses serviced by guides, cooks, and rangers give families an ideal base for viewing lions, rhinos, and other big game.

SCOTLAND Alladale Wilderness Lodge & Reserve (alladale.com; *three-night minimum; \$\$\$\$\$*) plunks the safari model into the middle of the Highlands. Families of up to 14 have the run of the house and surrounding 23,000-acre reserve, where Highland cattle and wildcats roam.

VENICE Unlike most palazzi, the new **JW Marriott Venice Resort & Spa** (marriott.com; **\$\$\$**) is super kid-friendly: there's a teen club and a family pool, plus classes on everything from traditional mask-making to steering a gondola.

FLORIDA The cult classic **Naples Grande Beach Resort** (naplesgrande.com; **\$\$\$\$**)—formerly a Waldorf Astoria—just emerged from a major overhaul that makes fun a top priority. Along with an upgraded beach, there's a 100-foot-long waterslide with a serious plunge. —HEIDI MITCHELL

Check out more of the best hotels for families at tandl.me/fmlyhtl.

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Some of the world's best shelling can be found on Captiva and Sanibel Islands. Visit beaches where kids can easily collect Conchs, Sand Dollars, Calico Scallops or more than 400

kinds of shells. The perfect collection always seems to attract one more perfect addition.

In addition to Captiva and Sanibel, hundreds of islands dot an expansive stretch of the Gulf. Most of them can only be reached by boat or seaplane. Whether on an island or the mainland, this region provides sanctuary to wildlife. Whistle and clap for dolphins that play in the wake behind your boat. Paddle inches from manatees bobbing throughout the Great Calusa Blueway while kayaking toward shady mangrove trees. Spot pink roseate spoonbills and more than 300 kinds of birds in the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge, the largest undeveloped mangrove ecosystem in the U.S.

The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel offers more than wildlife and nature. Many creative minds have flourished in this area. Inventor Thomas Edison and automobile manufacturer, Henry Ford, enjoyed their visits so much they put down roots. Their estates, filled with tropical gardens, laboratories and museums, prove the only limit to success is one's imagination.

Start planning your vacation at FortMyers-Sanibel.com, or order a free Lonely Planet guidebook, and start your new family tradition.



1

A bowling alley to lure Lebowski-ites

- Ham Yard Hotel, London
- Miami Beach Edition



2

Foie gras/breakfast mash-ups on the dinner menu

- Bazaar Meat by José Andrés in SLS Las Vegas ("Foieffles" with peanut butter and honey)
- America Restaurant in Trump International Hotel & Tower Toronto (foie gras flapjacks with preserved-quince caramel)



NOTICED

IMITATION GAME

Hotels are always trotting out some novelty—a design flourish, a kicky new amenity—in the hope of scoring originality points. But sometimes they're beaten to the punch by another property on the other side of the world. Can you tell which did what first?

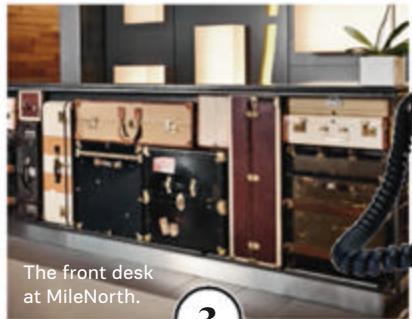
(Answers at the bottom of the page)

→
A bourbon-based American Gothic at Midnight Rambler.

BEAUTY

FARM TO FACE

Skin-care companies are taking a locavore approach, producing goods with a strong sense of place.



3

A check-in desk made from upcycled steamer trunks and suitcases

- MileNorth Hotel, Chicago
- Chic & Basic Ramblas, Barcelona



4

Walls lined with retro-ironic prints from Brooklyn-based Flavor Paper

- Wythe Hotel, Brooklyn, New York
- W Seattle



5

A subterranean speakeasy-style bar

- Prohibition at Rosewood Hotel Georgia, Vancouver
- Midnight Rambler at the Joule Hotel, Dallas



6

Nouveau-Mad Men rotary phones in the rooms

- High Line Hotel, New York
- Hotel Zed, Victoria, British Columbia



7

Marquee letters as art

- 123 Sébastopol Hotel, Paris
- The Dean, Providence, Rhode Island

Just as chefs are increasingly careful about knowing where their food comes from, beauty brands are thinking more about what goes into their products—and even growing their own ingredients. **Bottega Organica** (bottegaorganica.com) produces its own olive oil, sage, and roses on farms in Liguria, Italy, and Columbia County, New York, and Manila-based **VMV Hypoallergenics** (vmvhypoallergenics.com) harvests organic virgin coconut oil for its skin-care and makeup lines on a family-run estate. **Julisis** (julisis.com) combines liquid precious metals with medicinal plants grown in a 120-year-old biodynamic garden near the Italian Alps. Cult favorite **Tata Harper** (tataharperskincare.com) raises flowers and herbs for an extensive range of skin care and cosmetics on its property in Vermont. For **Guerlain** (guerlain.com), the unique honey produced by black bees in Brittany, France, led to the anti-aging Abeille Royale collection as well as a partnership with the local bee conservancy. Sustainable beauty, indeed.—KATIE JAMES

(com) combines liquid precious metals with medicinal plants grown in a 120-year-old biodynamic garden near the Italian Alps. Cult favorite **Tata Harper** (tataharperskincare.com) raises flowers and herbs for an extensive range of skin care and cosmetics on its property in Vermont. For **Guerlain** (guerlain.com), the unique honey produced by black bees in Brittany, France, led to the anti-aging Abeille Royale collection as well as a partnership with the local bee conservancy. Sustainable beauty, indeed.—KATIE JAMES



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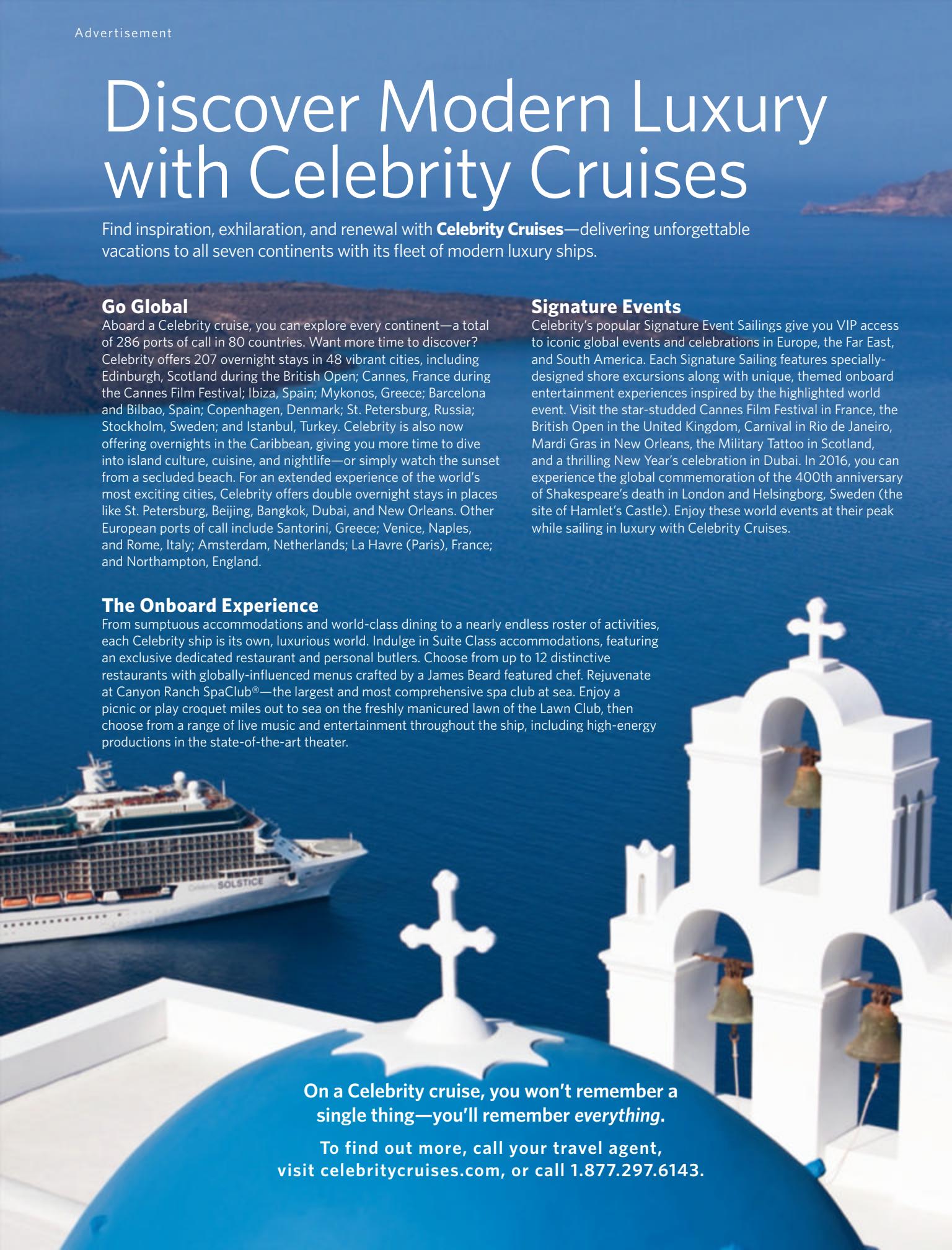
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Capri was even more breathtaking than I imagined, and I thought to myself: *remember this.*

Remember the incredible picnic at the Colosseum that our Destination Concierge arranged just for us. The poolside talks we had on board about first crushes and best friends. And, how just being together (even without a hot air balloon) is enough to make your spirit soar.

It's funny; I don't remember a single thing from our Celebrity cruise—I remember *everything*.

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SMALL WONDERS

Spring's hottest handbags are a day-tripper's dream—chic, packable, and perfectly strapped.



1 Mark Cross leather box bag, \$2,395. **2** Burberry hand-painted bag, \$2,795. **3** Reed Krakoff calf-leather tote, \$1,290. **4** Bulgari calf-leather purse, \$2,350. **5** Jimmy Choo leather top-handle bag, \$1,495.

BY JANE BISHOP

SEE BUYER'S GUIDE, PAGE 165.

 T+L style director Jane Bishop pins her favorite looks from the spring collections on Pinterest at tandl.me/spring15.

FOOD

TOKYO BY THE SEINE

Japanese chefs are jazzing up the Paris dining scene—no sushi or soy sauce in sight. By Alexandra Marshall



One of France's food obsessions of late is whether *la gastronomie française* is in decline, eclipsed by the sexier, more innovative cooking coming out of Copenhagen, Spain, and even London. But another popular dinner-table conversation—one about the onslaught of Japanese chefs who are setting up high-end restaurants in Paris—suggests that the nation's cuisine isn't imperiled, it's just evolving. For a group of talented young chefs from Japan, French food is not only relevant but

also worth crossing continents to master and adapt. Parisians have welcomed the new guard's gentle hybridization, which emphasizes seasonal, intellectually ambitious, delicately prepared, and mostly French food—with only a hint of a foreign accent.

There's long been an affinity between French and Japanese cuisines—both ritualistic, both demanding. "For so many of us who got inspired by French food back in Japan, the only



Abri
92 Rue du Faubourg
Poissonnière, 10th Arr.;
33-1-83-97-00-00. \$\$\$

Clover
5 Rue Perronet, Seventh
Arr.; jeanfrancoispiege.com. \$\$\$



Restaurant AT
4 Rue du Cardinal
Lemoine, Fifth Arr.;
atsushitanaka.com.
\$\$\$\$



Restaurant Pages
4 Rue Auguste
Vacquerie, 16th Arr.;
33-1-47-20-74-94. \$\$\$

From top:
Chef Katsushi Okiyama
at Abri; a dish
at Restaurant AT;
Restaurant Pages.

way to gain knowledge of real French products and philosophy was to come here," says Ryuji Teshima, who opened **Restaurant Pages** last year near the Arc de Triomphe. Teshima obeys both his native and adopted cuisines' edicts of strong and clear flavors, as in a deconstructed pot-au-feu with Wagyu beef, Limousin veal, pristine root vegetables, and citrus zest. Shinya Usami studied at the Cordon Bleu before opening **Clover** in December with Jean-François Piège, the chef behind the fashion hangout Brasserie Thoumieux. The quinoa chips with eggplant and black-sesame mousse speak to the chef's Japanese roots—but Clover's duck *pithiviers* is pure ancien régime. At the popular **Abri**, in the 10th Arrondissement, the food is mostly neo-bistro; Taillevent alumnus Katsushi Okiyama's most conspicuous nod

to his place of birth is the *tonkatsu* sandwich, served at lunch on Mondays.

At **Restaurant AT**, chef Atsushi Tanaka creates bold dishes—such as shredded poached lobster with raw radishes and squid-ink bread crumbs—that merely flirt with Asian flavors. But the bite-size portions presented dramatically on stoneware subtly reveal the chef's heritage. ♦

Find *T+L's Essential Paris guide* at tandl.me/prsgde.

The Catskills

MY FAVORITE PLACE

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PHOTOGRAPHED BY WESTON WELLS

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KATIE LOVES HER BUSY LIFE IN NEW YORK CITY, but come the weekend she heads to The Graham & Co. in the scenic Catskills for an adventure-filled experience. Fashion and comfort are key, so Katie's Jambu shoes always go along for the ride.

DAY

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2. TUNDRA

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1
ENJOYING THE GREAT OUTDOORS

2

NIGHT

3. CHARLEY

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4. FLINT

The Flint is a classic convertible sandal with velcro strapping for adjustability and security. Featuring a contoured footbed, this sandal will give your feet the support they deserve.



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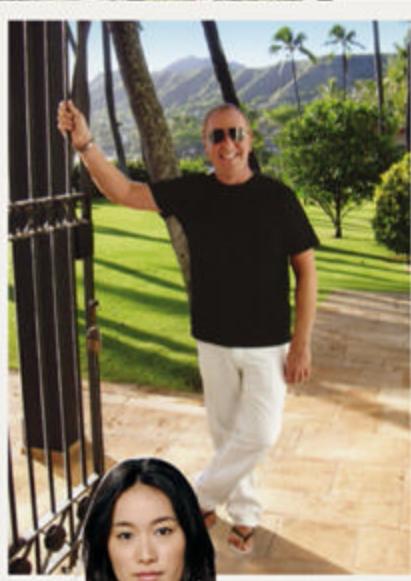


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Clockwise from top: Doris Duke's former estate, Shangri La; Michael Kors at Shangri La; a tropical look from Kors's spring/summer collection; sunset on Oahu; the *pho* French dip sandwich at the Pig & the Lady; Hound & Quail.

FIELD NOTES

ALOHA HIGH

How designer Michael Kors does Honolulu.

Why do I love Hawaii? I love it because it's not too far, but it feels like it's worlds away. I love the lush landscapes, the mountain vistas, the perfect weather. I love that people go swimming after work before they get ready for dinner. What could be better than that?

STAY & EAT I always spend a few days in Honolulu—it's the ideal blend of city and sea. The divine **Halekulani Hotel** (halekulani.com; \$\$\$) is right on Waikiki Beach and close to some of the best restaurants and shops. One of my favorite dishes is the *pho* French dip at the **Pig & the Lady** (thepigandthelady.com; \$\$\$), a braised brisket sandwich that you dunk in Vietnamese-style broth. Another must: lunch on the terrace at **Plumeria Beach House** (kahalaresort.com; \$\$\$) at the Kahala Resort, a short drive from Waikiki. I always order the Kahala burger—it comes with a fried egg, bacon, and guacamole—and check out the dolphins in the lagoon before I leave.

SHOP The quirky **Hound & Quail** (houndandquail.com) stocks vintage and modern furniture. There's always something I never knew I needed—like a taxidermied deer head. And I enjoy browsing the vintage aloha shirts and Hawaiian silver jewelry at **Manu Antiques** (manuantiques.com).

DO While I'm happy sitting on the beach with a stack of magazines, it's worth spending a few hours at Doris Duke's former estate, **Shangri La** (shangrilahawaii.org), with its gardens and collection of Islamic art. When time allows, I fly over to the Big Island for a day or two. The traditional lomilomi massage at the **Four Seasons Resort Hualalai** (fourseasons.com; \$\$\$) leaves me feeling completely re-energized. And a helicopter ride around the island's black volcanic landscape reminds me that Hawaii is like no place else on earth.

■ Designer Michael Kors collects his travel tips and inspirations at destinationkors.com.



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**THE LINCOLN
MOTOR COMPANY**

*2015 Navigator 4x2, \$61,480 MSRP; as shown, 2015 Navigator L 4x2 with optional features, \$66,145 MSRP. MSRP excludes \$995 destination, tax, title and license fees. See dealer for price. **Using 93-octane fuel. *EPA-estimated rating of 16 city/22 hwy/18 combined mpg. Actual mileage will vary. Class is Luxury Extended Utilities. EPA-estimated rating of 15 city/20 hwy/17 combined mpg. Actual mileage will vary. Navigator L 4x2 shown.

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Luxe Amenities, Luscious Cuisine

A Seabourn ship is like a private yacht, where members share expansive open decks and inviting social spaces. The suites “*are huge and gorgeous, and everything is top-notch,*” noted one T+L reader about the all-suite accommodations, many with private verandas. Gaze out the enormous picture windows to the sea, sink into fine Egyptian cotton linens, or let your personal suite stewardess draw you a Pure PamperingSM bath with exclusive wellness products from Molton Brown, London. Cuisine is prepared à la minute by skilled chefs, whether it’s enjoyed at the restaurants or in your suite. “*Seabourn cruises are fairy-tale,*” said a T+L reader. “*Eggs Benedict for breakfast. Lobster and champagne for lunch. Filet for dinner. Seabourn is perfection.*”

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David Kaplan (left) and Alex Day at Honeycut, their downtown L.A. bar.

THE INSIDER

WHAT MAKES A GREAT COCKTAIL BAR

David Kaplan and Alex Day, the cocktail geniuses who rewrote the book on bartending at New York's renowned Death & Company ([deathandcompany.com](#)), are now conquering Los Angeles with a trio of bars: Honeycut ([honeycutla.com](#)), and the recently opened Normandie Club ([thenormandieclub.com](#)) and Walker Inn ([thewalkerinn.com](#)). We asked them to break down the elements of a first-rate drinking den.

Cocktails should tell a story—even when there's no menu. “At every great bar, you get the mission from the menu,” Kaplan says. “Does it allow you to peruse the drinks easily? Is it an homage? The menu is one of the tangible pieces you spend the most time with. The **Dead Rabbit** ([deadrabbitnyc.com](#)), in New York, clearly wants to create the biggest, most in-depth menu.” Day cites **Pouring Ribbons** ([pouringribbons.com](#)), in New York’s East Village, which “created a graphic to describe the acidity levels and freshness and bitterness of each drink, so you know what to expect.” On the other hand, Washington, D.C.’s **Columbia Room** ([columbiaroomdc.com](#)) has no menu at all. “You’re there because you trust them. You’re there for the ride,” says Kaplan.

The drinks should showcase the bartenders’ knowledge and passion. “We look for some of the new ingredients coming onto the market,” Day says. “Amaros, mezcats—how are they pushing the envelope?” He’s intrigued by single-focus bars like New York’s **Amor y Amargo** ([amoryamargony.com](#)), which is dedicated entirely to amaros. (“They have no citrus whatsoever,” he says. “I don’t even think they have shakers in there!”) Anthony Schmidt, at San Diego’s **Rare Form** ([godblessrareform.com](#)), is “very brandy-focused, but not in the way most of us think of it,” Kaplan says. “Almost all of his drinks have a split base of brandy and eau de vie. Not many bars do that.”

Great design makes drinks taste better. “A cocktail bar has to be welcoming,” Kaplan says. **Polite Provisions** ([politeprovisions.com](#)), in San Diego, has folding doors that open onto the street. It’s got a dim glow. It’s the kind of place you want to hang out all day and into the night.” A theme can work, too, as at **Hale Pele** ([halepele.com](#)), a tiki bar in Portland, Oregon. “It’s cluttered and chaotic and makes you feel like a kid,” he says. —As told to Laura Itzkowitz

Meet more of New York's best bartenders at [tandl.me/nycbar](#).

GOODS**THE DOCTOR IS IN**

Orthopedic sandals are back, thanks to Marc Jacobs, whose spring collection includes wooden-soled slides resembling classic flats by Dr. Scholl’s (which some might say never went out of style). This is joyful news for travelers: the easy-on-the-feet ergonomics make them ideal for walking on city streets and beach boardwalks alike. From left: Dr. Scholl’s sandal (\$78); Marc Jacobs twill slide (\$1,945). —JANE BISHOP

SEE BUYER'S GUIDE, PAGE 165.



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POINT OF VIEW

HIGH ANXIETY

As a parade of ever-taller, starchitect-designed giants now tower over London, critic Alastair Gordon asks whether the soul of the city is getting lost in the shadows.

“I don’t know what London’s coming to—the higher the buildings, the lower the morals,” wrote Noël Coward in the 1930s, and he would be right, once again, in 2015 as London’s skyline bristles with a new class of mega-towers rearing up from every vantage point. Brits have given the new skyscrapers quaint names—Renzo Piano’s London Bridge Tower, with its tapering, pyramidal point, is the Shard; the Walkie-Talkie describes the oddly bulging top of 20 Fenchurch Street, by Rafael Viñoly; Richard Rogers’s sloping Leadenhall Building is the Cheesegrater. It’s as if such tea-cozy titles could somehow reduce the impact on the city’s skyline. These are just three of the more aggressively overscale buildings, but there are as many as 236 new projects of more than 20 stories planned in the near future. And while some Londoners see this new degree of verticality as a positive indicator of economic growth, others are feeling a kind of group vertigo, and I wonder whether something important may be getting lost in the process.

After all, a city that for years doggedly protected its historic “viewing corridors” is now home to

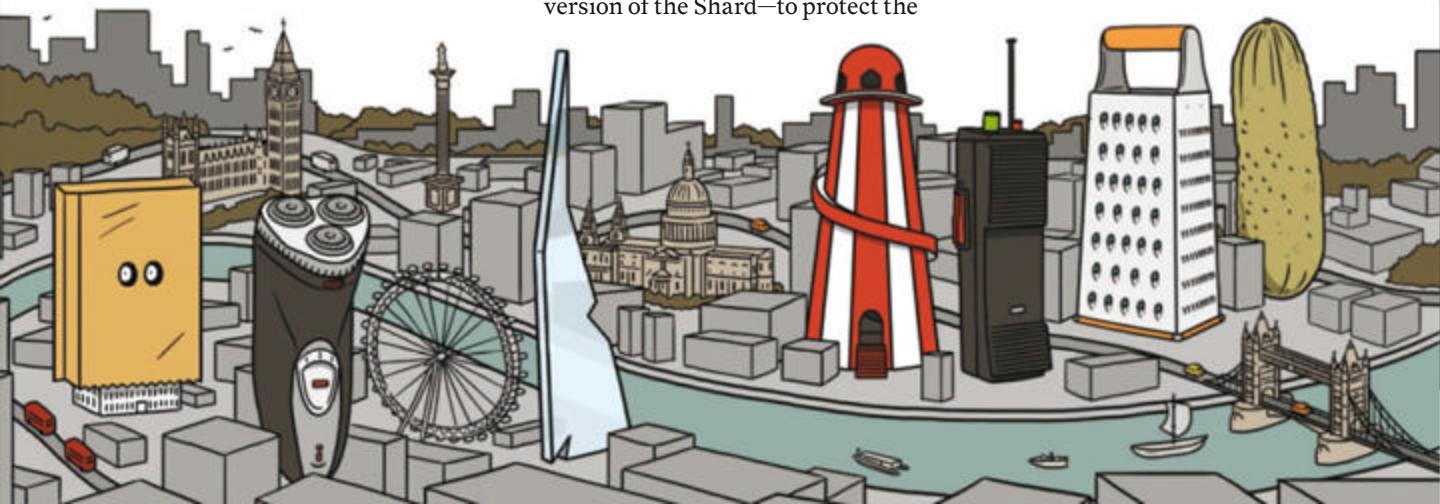
the tallest building in the European Union, the 1,016-foot Shard. Many of the supersize towers are grossly out of scale with their neighbors, blocking out the sun, looming over the Thames, and creating a kind of spatial dislocation. Landmarks that used to seem monumental—Big Ben, for instance—appear strangely diminished. The 525-foot-high Walkie-Talkie shrinks the nearby Tower of London to the scale of a tourist trinket.

What’s more, many of the skyscrapers are designed in a generic modern style that might as easily be found in Dubai, Shanghai, or Dallas: a singularly dominant shape sheathed in miles of reflective glass, offering no public space or reference to the indigenous forms of London itself. Indeed, many of these projects have been funded by outsiders: the Shard was made possible by the Qatari government, while the Pinnacle (a.k.a. “Helter Skelter”), a 64-floor spiraling glass tower, was backed by the Saudi Economic and Development Company.

Paris, on the other hand, seems to be moving in the opposite direction. There, the city council recently rejected a 42-story glass tower designed by Herzog & de Meuron—a stumpier version of the Shard—to protect the

city’s historic imprint. Some argue that Paris’s preservationist attitude, along with higher tax rates, has locked it in a kind of 19th-century bubble, limiting its appeal to foreign investors.

Of course, not all of London’s new skyscrapers are as discordant as others. A building’s success depends on a number of factors, including the quality of the architecture and the surrounding context. Within a five-block section of the City, London’s financial district, starkly modern buildings by the likes of Norman Foster (the bullet-shaped Gherkin, which in 2004 set off the frenzied rush for the next iconic statement), Jean Nouvel, and James Stirling sit side by side with Baroque and Victorian structures, interspersed with public plazas, winding passages, even the remains of a Roman wall. The sophisticated translucency of Rothschild’s New Court, reimagined by Rem Koolhaas, is offset by a public garden that leads to St. Stephen Walbrook, a 17th-century domed church by Christopher Wren. It all works together to create a complex layering of old and new, high and low, private and public—a kind of Dickensian urban tangle that seems just right for London. •





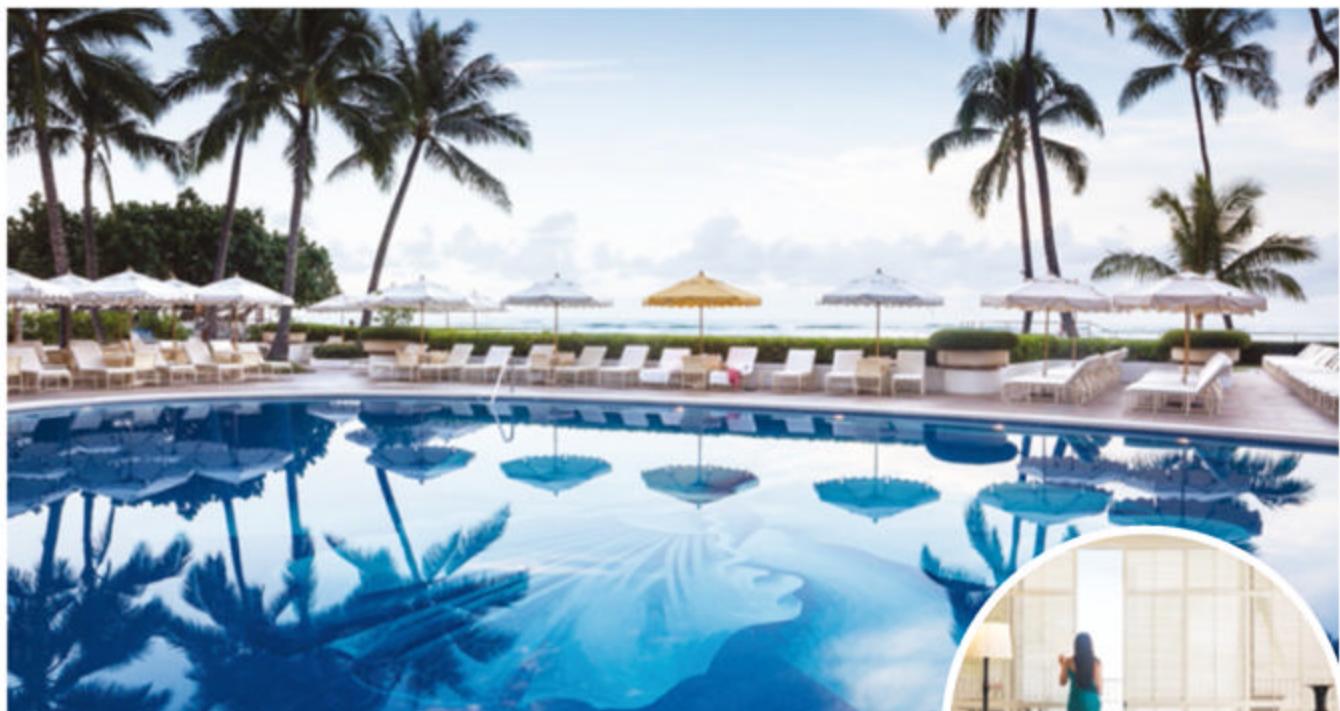
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the commitment

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the legacy

Nearly 100 years ago, this island getaway was only a simple collection of bungalows dotting the shoreline of Waikīkī's

breathtaking Gray's beach. Today, with its unobstructed views of Diamond Head and open-air design that highlights the island's unequaled splendor, Halekulani is among the most desired destinations in all of Hawaii. Always exceeding expectations, it's no wonder that Halekulani is a member of the *Travel + Leisure* Hall of Fame—an honor given to winners who have been on the World's Best list for at least a decade. From the very beginning, the hotel has provided guests with an unparalleled experience of indulgent serenity amid the vibrant setting of Waikīkī. With its sought-after beachfront location, understated elegance, and exceptional personalized service, Halekulani is an oasis of luxurious tranquility in the heart of Waikīkī.

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Trip Doctor



STAYING FIT ON THE ROAD

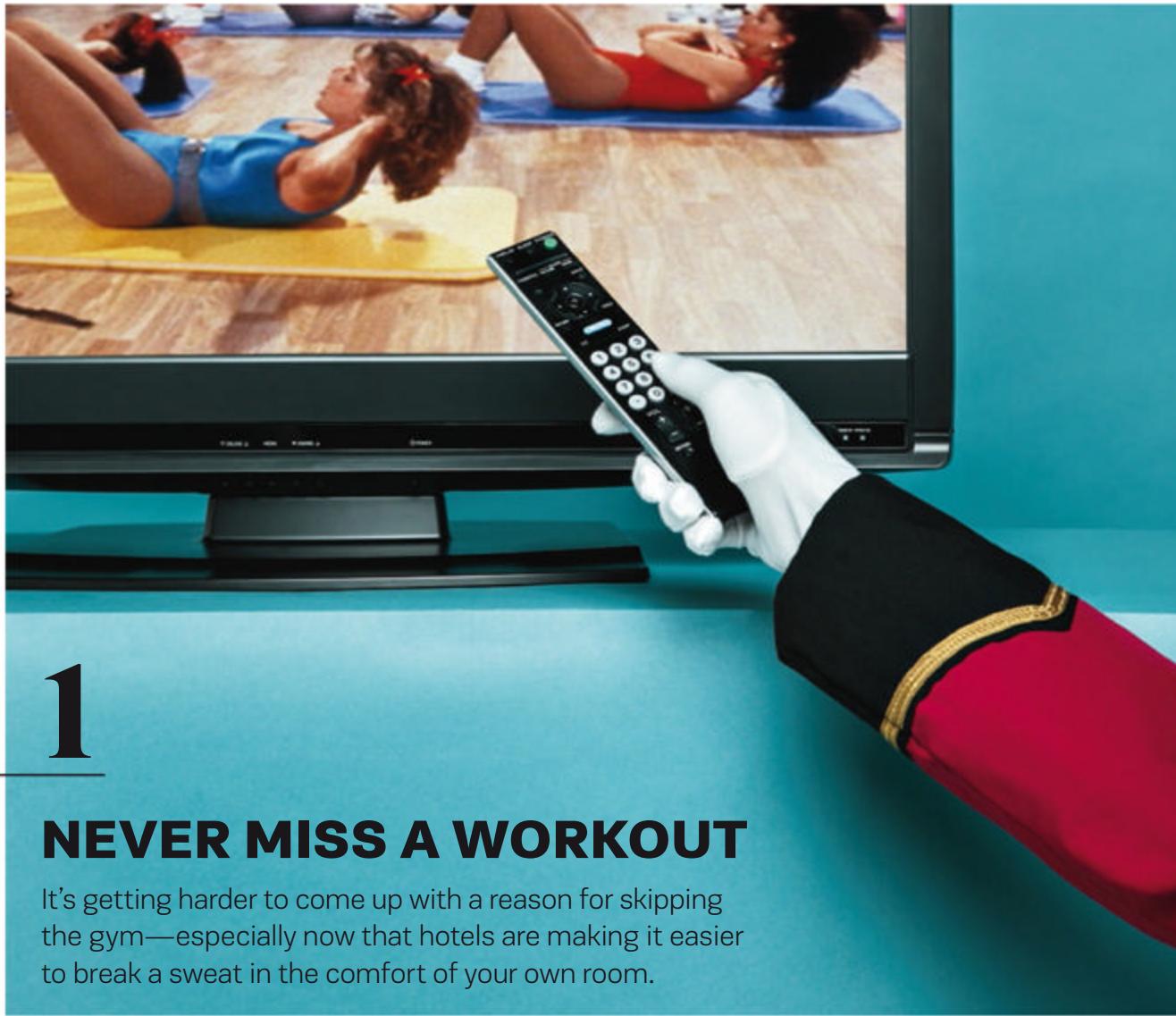
Destination spas aside, hotel wellness used to begin and end with a couple of massage rooms and a shoe-box-size gym. But now many companies are responding to the needs of nutrition-minded,

Fitbit-wearing travelers by incorporating holistic programming into every aspect of the guest experience—even launching entirely new brands that are making your health their business.

Here, five ways you can reap the benefits.

BY SANDRA RAMANI, WITH REPORTING BY NIKKI EKSTEIN AND MELANIE LIEBERMAN. PHOTOGRAPHED BY FREDRIK BRODÉN

Strategies



1

NEVER MISS A WORKOUT

It's getting harder to come up with a reason for skipping the gym—especially now that hotels are making it easier to break a sweat in the comfort of your own room.

THE EXCUSE I don't have time to exercise.

THE SOLUTION As part of its brand-wide commitment to wellness, InterContinental Hotel Group's **Even Hotels** (evenhotels.com) feature in-room "fitness zones" that include cork flooring, balance balls, resistance bands, and suggested moves. (Urban brand **Tryp by Wyndham** and **Omni Hotels & Resorts** also have fitness equipment in select rooms.)

THE EXCUSE I need someone to motivate me.

THE SOLUTION At **45 Park Lane** (dorchestercollection.com), in London, you can follow local fitness guru Matt Roberts through video drills (just call the front desk for mats and resistance bands). The **Shangri-La Hotel** (shangri-la.com) in Toronto has joined with Canada's own Lululemon to produce a 25-minute yoga video that can be streamed via in-room TVs and iPads.

THE EXCUSE I didn't have space to pack my running shoes.

THE SOLUTION **Westin** (westin.com) has been loaning New Balance gear to guests for years. Now other hotels are following suit. Loyalty-club members at all **Fairmont** properties (fairmont.com) can request Reebok apparel and sneakers, while **Trump Hotels** (trumphotelcollection.com) offer Travel Fit kits that come with iPods and Under Armour shoes and clothes.

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²Nielsen Scantrack XACO Dollar Sales 52 w/e October 25, 2014.

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#ReadyForAction

Strategies

Which destination spa is right for you? Get inspiration at tandl.me/spa2015.



SEE A SPECIALIST

Want to overhaul your diet and exercise regimen? Urban hotels are now offering the kind of diagnostic tools that have traditionally been found at destination spas. Consultants at the **Shilla Seoul** (shilla.net) are on hand at the gym to give guests a full fitness assessment and to create custom workouts for them. At the **Madinat Jumeirah** (jumeirah.com), in Dubai, trainers help guests evaluate and improve their cardiovascular strength in a high-altitude simulator. Other hotels, including the **Fairmont Scottsdale Princess** (fairmont.com) and the **Four Seasons Resort & Club Dallas at Las Colinas** (fourseasons.com), have introduced the Bod Pod to their spas. The egg-shaped chamber measures guests' fat-to-muscle ratio, so that nutritionists can personalize wellness plans.

TREND-SPOTTING

IN THE BAG

Hollywood's latest health obsession is popping up in hotels: IV vitamin treatments are on the menu at Miami's **Delano South Beach**, which offers guests energy elixirs and immunity boosters, and at **MGM Grand's Reviv spa**, in Las Vegas, which features (surprise, surprise) party-recovery and hangover cures.



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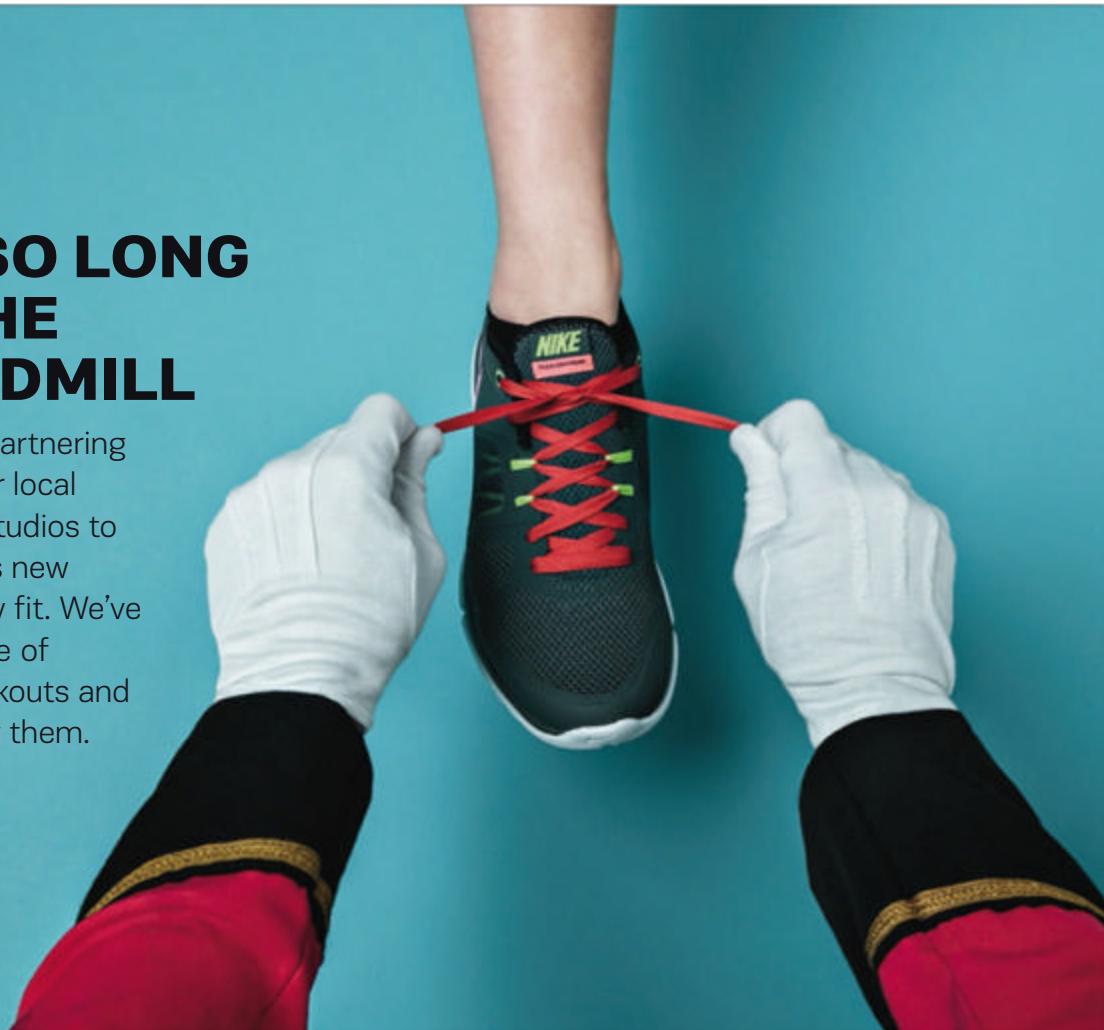
ARPQGMMF

Strategies

3

SAY SO LONG TO THE TREADMILL

Hotels are partnering with popular local gyms and studios to offer guests new ways to stay fit. We've picked some of the top workouts and where to try them.



BARRE

WHAT IT IS Ballet meets Pilates meets strength training—no dance skills required.

WHY WE LIKE IT Nothing gets your quads fired up like doing a couple hundred pliés in quick succession.

WHERE TO TRY IT California's **Hotel La Jolla** (hotellajolla.com), which partners with nearby studio Barre3.

AERIAL YOGA

WHAT IT IS A Cirque du Soleil–inspired twist on yoga, with silk hammocks in place of mats.

WHY WE LIKE IT With the help of gravity, you can get deeper stretches.

WHERE TO TRY IT The **Fairmont Scottsdale Princess** (fairmont.com) offers classes on site.

STUDIO SPIN

WHAT IT IS High-intensity cycling classes with breaks for upper-arm conditioning.

WHY WE LIKE IT Great playlists and a strong communal vibe.

WHERE TO TRY IT The rooftop of New York City's **Refinery Hotel** (refineryhotelnewyork.com).

LITHE METHOD

WHAT IT IS A blend of cardio and weights that takes cues from

competitive cheerleading.

WHY WE LIKE IT You can burn up to 1,000 calories in a single hour.

WHERE TO TRY IT The Stratus Rooftop Lounge at the **Hotel Monaco Philadelphia** ([monaco philadelphia.com](http://monacophiladelphia.com)).

CROSSFIT

WHAT IT IS A military-style mix of squats, weights, and sprints.

WHY WE LIKE IT Practitioners swear it's the fastest way to get fit.

WHERE TO TRY IT Balance Gym's Foggy Bottom studio, inside the **Fairmont Washington, D.C., Georgetown** (fairmont.com).

Jewel of DC: THE JEFFERSON

Explore a city filled with capital treasures—then retreat to boutique luxury at The Jefferson, Washington DC. Comfort and individual care reign supreme at this intimate, historic Beaux Arts hotel, where welcoming personnel make an art form of catering to each guest's needs.

Boutique Beauty

Elegance and history infuse all 95 rooms and suites—yet the hotel's amenities are 100 percent modern. Complimentary amenities include Wi-Fi in guest rooms and public spaces; bottled water; local and international calls; and garment pressing (one item per guest, per stay). The hotel also features a sizeable collection of antiques and original, signed documents encouraging guests to escape the fast pace of the modern world or connect with it as they choose.

Sublime Tastes

On site, savor the creations of DC's only *Forbes* five-star restaurant—Plume, with dishes inspired by Thomas Jefferson's kitchen gardens at Monticello. Plume's wine list of over 1,300 labels spans more than a dozen nationalities and dates back to a rare 1720 Borges Madeira. Dine fireside here, or enjoy the pleasures of 24-hour in-room dining. The flavors continue with breakfast, lunch, or afternoon tea at The Greenhouse, house-made cocktails at Quill, and unique vinotherapy treatments at The Petite Spa.



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Strategies



TAKE TIME TO RELAX

Hotels are stepping in to help workaholics and e-mail addicts truly disconnect. **Westin** (westin.com) pioneered this trend, partnering with meditation guru Andy Puddicombe to develop a series of ten-minute travel-themed podcasts; topics include "Switching Off from Work," "Using Technology Mindfully," and "Getting Ready for Sleep." The new eco-focused **1 Hotels** (ihotels.com) brand is also getting in on the act, with in-room meditation videos and private guided sessions at its first property, in Miami Beach. (Outposts in Manhattan and Brooklyn are coming soon.) The **Omni La Costa Resort & Spa** (omnihotels.com), near San Diego, meanwhile, offers its guests free guided meditation and yoga sessions through the neighboring Chopra Center for Wellbeing, founded by Dr. Deepak Chopra.

TREND-SPOTTING

THE BIG SQUEEZE

The hippest hotels now have juice bars. **Kimpton** is serving fresh-pressed blends at its U.S. properties. Miami's **Metropolitan by Como** specializes in an anti-bloating concoction (so you can rock your bikini with confidence). And at the **Ace Hotel Downtown Los Angeles**, you can combat jet lag with a dose of Goodness Greens, a dandelion-and-kale drink from local favorite Moon Juice.



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Strategies

5



GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Thanks to these innovations, you can rest easy on the road.

SMART BEDS Last year, **Four Seasons** (fourseasons.com) created a customizable bed, allowing guests to pick their preferred firmness for mattress toppers and pillows. At some **Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts** (crownepiazza.com), new curved headboards act as sound buffers.

SOUNDPROOFING The **Beverly Hills Hotel's** (dorchestercollection.com) newly redone rooms have extra padding underneath carpets, noise-reducing door seals, and televisions with low maximum volume settings (so your neighbor can't keep you up). Book a room in

the **Fairmont Vancouver Airport's** (fairmont.com) Quiet Zone, and you'll get triple-paned windows along with a service blackout from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m.—the ultimate in “Do not disturb.”

EXPERT HELP **Swissôtel Berlin's** (swissotel.com) Dr. Michael Feld has an arsenal of solutions for guests who can't stop tossing and turning. Among them: light therapy, power naps on specially designed loungers, or time in a mountain-air simulator. At London's **Corinthia Hotel** (corinthia.com), you can order dinner from nutritionist Jeannette Hyde's

Sleep Menu, which includes dishes rich in tryptophan and magnesium, or head to the spa for Sleep Ritual treatments that are meant to balance your energy.

BEDTIME GADGETS **Omni Hotels & Resorts**, Chicago's **Park Hyatt** (parkhyatt.com), and the just-opened **Palladian** (palladianhotel.com), in Seattle, provide white-noise machines upon request. Even night-lights are getting a digital upgrade. In some rooms at the **MGM Grand** (mgmgrand.com), in Las Vegas, bedside lights cast a warm glow calibrated to help regulate melatonin levels.

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Strategies

MEASURING UP

FITNESS FADS

Hotels love a good attention-grabbing amenity, especially one that involves health and wellness. We looked at some of the latest offerings to see which are worth your time.



At many **JW Marriott** properties worldwide, turndown service includes a vial of **Revive Oil**, an aromatherapy blend tailored to help guests shake off a long flight—or recover from the night before.

TRENDY

Sofitel Paris Arc de Triomphe has Paris-inspired **yoga instruction cards**, in which Downward Dog has been replaced with the "Pyramides du Louvre" pose.



Salad-in-a-Jar vending machines at the **Chicago Marriott O'Hare** sell dishes ranging from kale with quinoa to lemon-pepper chicken salad.

Downloadable GPS maps from **Radisson Blu** hotels offer **programmed (scenic) running routes** for select cities.



A dedicated concierge at the **Nines**, in Portland, Oregon, has a **workout closet** stocked with balance balls, kettlebells, workout DVDs, and Nike FuelBands—all of which can be delivered to your room.



QUIRKY

Como Hotels has an "intuitive counselor" who leads guests through a visualization process to help find "a new perspective on whatever is troubling or confusing in life."



At select **Westin** properties, you can **tour a city and work out simultaneously** via ElliptiGO, an elliptical-bike hybrid (odd looks from locals be damned).



Element Hotels have **stationary bikes that charge your portable devices**—powered by your pedaling.



Olympic rower and triathlete Luke Walton leads **personal training sessions** for guests at San Diego's **US Grant Hotel**.

USEFUL

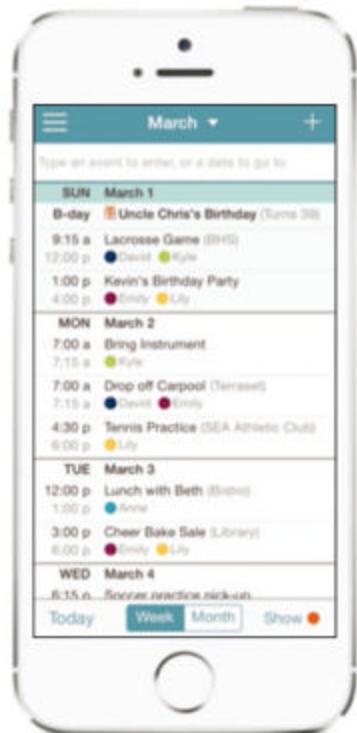
TREND-SPOTTING

A MOMENT OF ZEN

Too time-crunched for an 80-minute massage? **JW Marriott's** new Spa by JW recently launched express treatments at the Houston downtown property and will roll them out at

more than 20 of the company's hotels by year's end. Guests can book podlike suites on the fly for 12- to 25-minute energy-boosting back rubs and muscle-relieving body

treatments. The key innovation: amped-up massage chairs with built-in heating, aromatherapy, and plenty of outlets (so your gadgets can recharge while you do the same).



THINK OF IT AS MOM'S SECRET WEAPON.

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Q+A

HOW CAN I GET VIP TREATMENT AT A HOTEL?

Let's face it: hotels favor certain guests over others. Some will always be offered the biggest rooms with the best views, the extra attention, and all the perks (welcome gifts, on-site credit) that make staying at a hotel a little bit nicer.

So how do you get VIP service if you're not a big spender and haven't racked up a million loyalty points? Unlike finding cut-rate deals, there's no app for that—so here are a few strategies.

Work with a top agent

The luxury-hotel industry is built on relationships, many of them formalized agreements between hospitality companies

and travel agencies. Travel advisors get preferred rates and better commissions when booking clients into partner hotels—along with special amenities like room upgrades, early check-in and late checkout, and often spa or restaurant credits. Two of the biggest agency groups, **Virtuoso** (virtuoso.com) and **Signature** (signaturetravelnetwork.com), each work with thousands of top hotels. At Bermuda's Elbow Beach Resort, for example, guests who book with either a Signature or Virtuoso advisor will automatically get daily breakfast (worth \$35) and \$100 in resort credit, along with a space-available room upgrade and priority requests for early check-in/late checkout. Many advisors have deeper, personal relationships with hotel managers, which means still more benefits for their clients. Don't be shy about asking a potential advisor what he or she can do for you. You can find T+L's A-List of the best-connected travel advisors at tndl.me/tlist.

network.com), each work with thousands of top hotels. At Bermuda's Elbow Beach Resort, for example, guests who book with either a Signature or Virtuoso advisor will automatically get daily breakfast (worth \$35) and \$100 in resort credit, along with a space-available room upgrade and priority requests for early check-in/late checkout. Many advisors have deeper, personal relationships with hotel managers, which means still more benefits for their clients. Don't be shy about asking a potential advisor what he or she can do for you. You can find T+L's A-List of the best-connected travel advisors at tndl.me/tlist.

Use your card

One of the perks of ponying up the \$450 annual fee for an American Express Platinum Card is access to **American Express Fine Hotels & Resorts** (americanexpress.com/fhr), a collection of luxury properties that offer benefits to cardholders who book through the website or an affiliated travel specialist. The perks are nearly identical to those offered by Virtuoso and Signature (resort credit, free breakfast, space-available upgrades), with one crucial difference: you get a guaranteed 4 p.m. checkout. The website also lists cardholder deals, like a fifth night free at Aspen's Hotel Jerome during ski season.

Join the club

Loyalty pays off even at the most basic level. **Starwood**, **Marriott**, **InterContinental**, and **Fairmont** all offer free Wi-Fi →

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

NOISY NEIGHBORS

Do...



Call the manager, so he or she can intervene. Trying to do it yourself may just escalate the problem.

Don't...



Expect to be moved. If the hotel is fully booked, you may have to put up with the inconvenience.

Do...



Ask for earplugs, or a white noise machine. An extra mattress propped against an adjoining door may even do the trick.

Don't...



Stay quiet if you think shoddy construction is to blame. You may get a discount or credit for your troubles.



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Photo by: Nigel Parry

Trip Doctor

The Fix

just for signing up. Often those at higher levels can check in early, depart late, get free breakfast, and be prioritized for upgrades—while also doubling their points and racking up free stays. And your request for a better room is more likely to fall on sympathetic ears if you can flash a membership card. There are also benefits to joining the programs of independent hotel collections like **Preferred Hotel Group, Leading Hotels of the World**, and **Small Luxury Hotels of the World**. Preferred Hotels gives free Internet to all its iPrefer members, while Small Luxury Hotels offers space-available room upgrades to all members, regardless of status. The Leaders Club from Leading Hotels costs \$150 annually, but guarantees daily breakfast, Internet access, and room upgrades when available.

Get into the lounge

Many hotels—especially those geared toward business travelers—offer executive- or club-level rooms that come with access to a private lounge serving complimentary breakfast, snacks, cocktails, and more. These rooms often have additional perks, too, including better views (on higher floors), dedicated concierges, and free Wi-Fi and laundry services. Club rooms can cost between 10 and 60 percent more than standard rooms. Some of the best are in Asian cities, where the offerings are more developed. At the new **Rosewood Beijing**, club rooms have access to a private pool table and bar. The sophisticated, residential-style executive lounge at the **Shilla Seoul** serves excellent food and has sweeping city views. You can also find great club floors in North America at the **Langham Chicago** and the **Ritz-Carlton Toronto**. The amenities (and quality) vary by hotel, but if you're planning to spend a lot of time at the property, free breakfast and cocktails alone can pay off. +

FAMILY TRAVEL

ISLAND-HOPPING: MAKING MEMORIES COUNT

You don't have to go across the world to experience a family vacation packed with beautiful sights, culture and delicious cuisine — you can get it all right in the Caribbean, if you know where to look. Come and explore the best destinations of this year-round favorite hot spot that children and adults alike will remember for years to come.



← **More than a ship.** Explore with Royal Caribbean International for an experience you just can't get anywhere else. Incredible dining, engaging kids programs and luxurious accommodations keep everyone happy while island hopping.



1 Cozumel, Mexico

Rising high above the crystal blue waters of the Caribbean sea, the **Tulum Mayan ruins** provide an awe-inspiring dose of culture, history and adventure all at once. The magnificence of these incredibly preserved ancient temples is one memory your little ones won't soon forget — and neither will you. Plus, the panoramic views of the sea once you reach the top will make it all worth it.

2 Falmouth, Jamaica

There's an unforgettable adventure around every corner in this lush tropical destination. For a unique beach excursion, try a group **horseback ride and swim**, where you get to saddle up and ride through shallow shorelines. Head inland to barrel through the jungle on **4x4 all-terrain vehicles**. (Warning: You might get a little muddy — but it's all part of the fun.)

3 Labadée, Haiti

Make a splash in the Royal Caribbean exclusive paradise of Labadée, a beautiful stretch of private beaches on the coast of Haiti filled with plenty of memorable activities. How about zooming across the beach on the **world's longest over-water zip line**? The kids will love the larger than life **Aquapark**, while parents can find peace and quiet in one of the private cabanas.

4 Oranjestad, Aruba

Discover experiences unlike any other in this beautiful south Caribbean island. Snorkel in pristine waters and uncover a whole new world beneath the sea at **Aruba's famous Antilla shipwreck**. Afterward, trek through Oranjestad, the **historic Dutch capital of Aruba**, where traditional, multicolored houses charm and captivate passersby, leaving a lasting impression.

Explore these and 260 other worldwide destinations on Royal Caribbean International
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CHECK IN ON THE CHEAP

Five new tools that will help you get the room you want at the lowest possible price. **By Tom Samiljan**

FOR THE HAGGLER

Stayful

(Free; iOS)

You decide what to pay with this smart take on the Priceline model that offers bid suggestions in real time, based on a property's lowest listed price. Unlike some of its competitors, Stayful lets you review the fine print before you commit to any deal. We especially love its boutique inventory and solid last-minute deals.

TOP FIND 20 percent off at the Crescent Hotel Beverly Hills.

FOR THE INDECISIVE SHOPPER

Worldmate

(Free; Android, iOS)

Say farewell to buyer's remorse: this all-in-one travel organizer now sends price-drop alerts for any refundable booking you forward to trips@worldmate.com. It will also send counteroffers if better rates pop up at similar hotels in the area—or if you can upgrade to a better hotel for less money.

TOP FIND 33 percent off at the Hotel Allegro, a Kimpton property in Chicago.

FOR THE LOYALIST

StayAtHand

(Free; iOS)

Booking with most apps means choosing savings over loyalty points. This search tool collects deals directly from hotels so you can rack up rewards from each booking. A smart interface



also lets you comparison shop based on customizable search parameters like “five-star hotels in Hawaii this summer” or “hotels under \$300.”

TOP FIND 25 percent off at the Grand Wailea, in Maui.

FOR THE BARGAIN HUNTER

HotelPower

(Web only)

Sign up for this site's Travel Club, and you'll find discounts that reach up to 70 percent, even at properties that rarely ever discount (like Four Seasons). Membership is \$50 a year and can pay for itself in a single booking—as long as you have the patience to scroll through a somewhat cumbersome interface.

TOP FIND 56 percent off at New York City's JW Marriott.

FOR THE SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER

Hotelied

(Web only)

Sync your Facebook, Twitter, and other social media profiles to this service, and you can save up to 50 percent on luxury rooms in 36 cities. How it works:

Hotelied gathers promotions from hotels targeting specific types of guests (say, popular Instagram users, or people who work in fashion) and then matches travelers with the relevant deals—without ever sharing their personal details.

TOP FIND 40 percent off at the Metropolitan by Como, in Miami.

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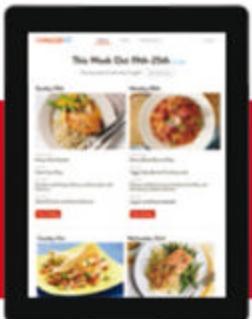
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The many charms of

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With exquisitely preserved Antebellum wonders and soul-stirring landscapes, Charleston is a must-see destination for travel enthusiasts. This picturesque city—complete with cobblestone streets, flickering lanterns, confection colored homes, and centuries-old historic landmarks—exudes Old World romance. Fall in love with Charleston, ranked #1 on the Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards list of top cities in the U.S. and Canada in 2013 and 2014.



BELMOND CHARLESTON PLACE

Book the *Spring Selections* package and tuck into a luxurious escape with sparkling wine upon arrival. Relax and reconnect with a rejuvenating spa treatment, a gourmet dining experience, a private walking tour, or a picturesque sunset sail. charlestonplace.com



FRENCH QUARTER INN

Book the *Grand Gastronomist* package for a two-day eating extravaganza that includes a tour of local culinary hot spots, a hands-on cooking class, a gourmet dinner, cookies with milk before bedtime, continental breakfast, bicycle rental and valet parking. fqicharleston.com



PLANTERS INN

Book the *Served with Style* package at Planters Inn, named #1 Top U.S. Small City Hotel by *Travel + Leisure* 2014 World's Best Awards, to experience the best of Charleston's acclaimed culinary scene and the splendor of South Carolina's only Relais & Chateaux property. plantersinn.com

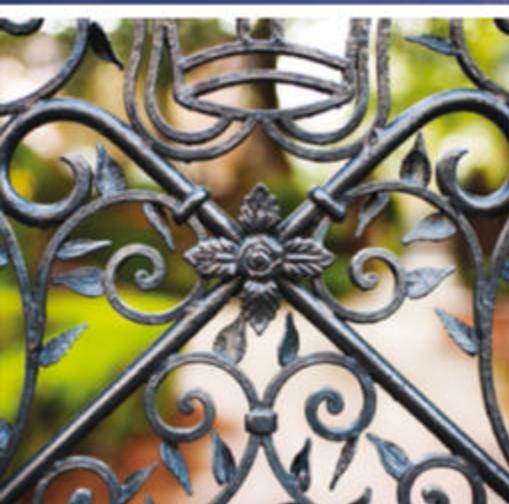


WENTWORTH MANSION

Book the *Nights of Romance* package to enjoy with flowers and champagne upon arrival, a delicious three-course dinner, and candlelight turndown service with chocolate-covered strawberries for an intimate getaway that will be long remembered. wentworthmansion.com

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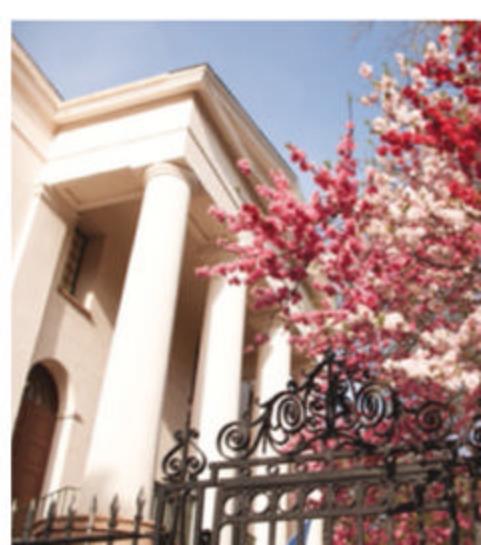


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The charming ambiance? The acclaimed restaurant scene?
Whatever it is, Charleston exudes a gravitational pull for travelers as the
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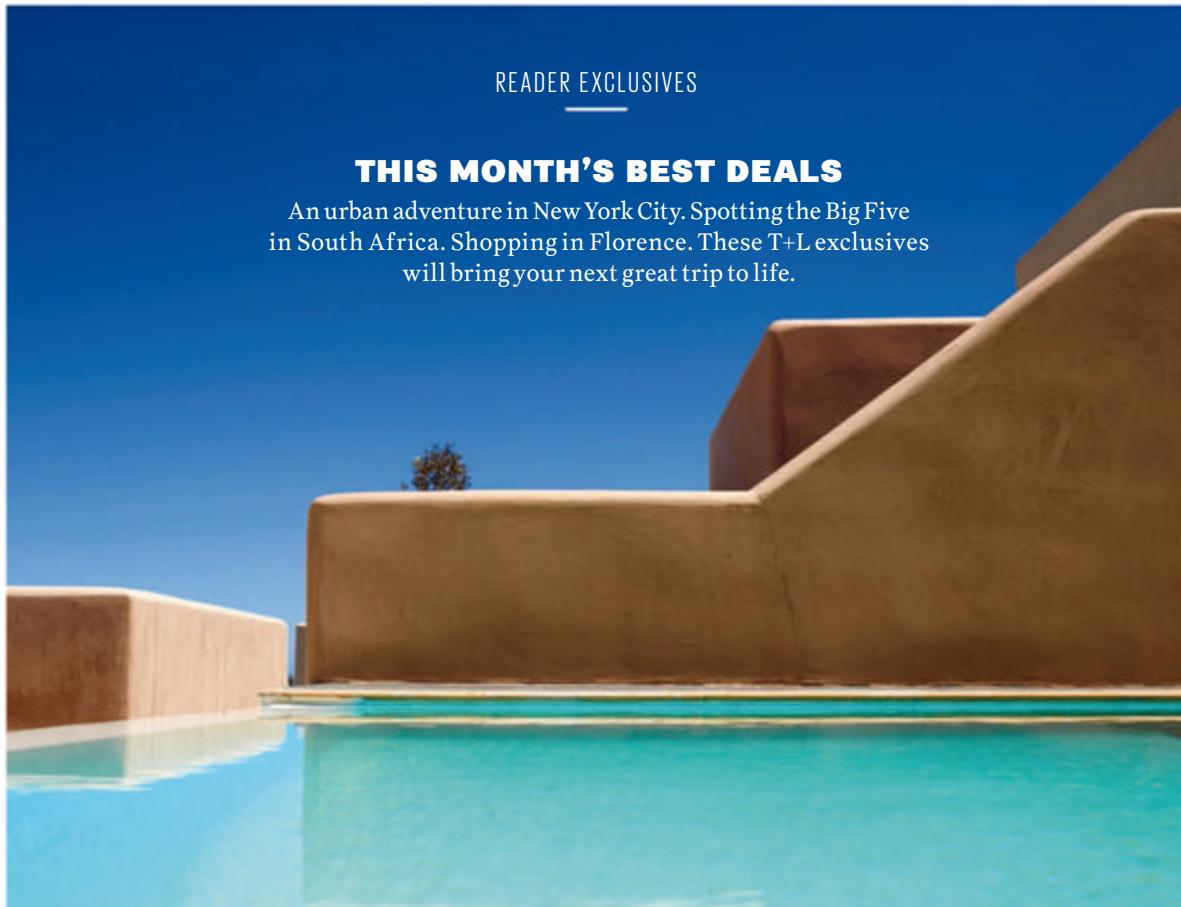
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READER EXCLUSIVES

THIS MONTH'S BEST DEALS

An urban adventure in New York City. Spotting the Big Five in South Africa. Shopping in Florence. These T+L exclusives will bring your next great trip to life.



A private plunge pool at Voreina Gallery Suites, in Santorini, Greece.

FOOD & DRINK

GREECE Santorini Crush from Voreina Gallery Suites (voreinagallerysuites.gr), a minimalist hideaway overlooking the Aegean Sea.

Stay Four nights in a Superior suite. **Bonus** Sample local varietals at nearby Venetsianos winery. **Cost** \$740 (\$185 per night), double; book by March 15. **Savings** 31 percent.

PITTSBURGH Whiskey Rebel from Kimpton's Hotel Monaco (monaco-pittsburgh.com), which has 248 retro-modern rooms outfitted with herringbone curtains and tufted headboards. **Stay** Two nights in a Parkview

king room. **Bonus** A distillery tour at Wigle Whiskey. **Cost** \$500 (\$250 per night), double; book by April 30. **Savings** 40 percent.

RHODE ISLAND Simply Spring from Castle Hill Inn (castlehillinn.com), a renovated 1874 mansion set on 40 acres in Newport. **Stay** Two nights in a Harbor House.

Bonus A three-course dinner for two at the property's award-winning restaurant. **Cost** \$700 (\$350 per night), double; book by April 30. **Savings** 31 percent.

BEACH

CALIFORNIA Catalina Island Getaway from the Pavilion

Hotel (visitcatalinaisland.com), a white-on-white resort on Santa Catalina Island, just off the L.A. coast. **Stay** Two nights in a standard room.

Bonus A ziplining adventure on the island. **Cost** \$998 (\$499 per night), double; book by April 15. **Savings** 47 percent.

ST. MARTIN Sweet Escape from Sonesta Ocean Point Resort (sonesta.com), a new addition to Maho Beach. **Stay** Two nights in a junior suite.

Bonus A private seaside dinner prepared by chef Misja Ruijs. **Cost** \$912 (\$456 per night), double, all-inclusive; book by April 30. **Savings** 30 percent.

Super Saver

CURAÇAO

Best of Both Worlds from Kura Hulanda's sister properties (kurahulanda.com), one in Curaçao's Dutch Colonial city of Willemstad and the other on the secluded western coast.

Stay Two nights in a Resort Deluxe room in town and two nights in a Superior Garden View room at the beach club.

Bonus Admission to the Museum Kura Hulanda, which spotlights the island's history. **Cost** \$728 (\$182 per night), double; book by May 15. **Savings** 52 percent. →

Deals

INFO Want to snag a T+L deal? Be quick, as quantities may be limited and are subject to availability (blackout dates apply). All packages are curated by T+L but offered solely by the provider. Find complete booking info at travelandleisure.com/travel-blog.

CITY

★ FLORENCE Explore Florence from the 11-room Grand Amore Hotel & Spa (grandamorehotel.com), which delivers high-end comforts (marble bathrooms, plush furnishings) just steps from the Duomo. **Stay** Two nights in a Superior room. **Bonus** Explore artisans' shops on a guided walking tour of the city. **Cost** \$1,115 (\$558 per night), double, through May 11. **Savings** 35 percent.

NEW YORK CITY Love Hugo from Hotel Hugo (hotelhugony.com), a sleek SoHo address with views of the Hudson River. **Stay** Two nights in a Deluxe king room. **Bonus** Cocktails at the hotel's buzzy rooftop lounge. **Cost** From \$378 (\$189 per night), double, March 1–April 30. **Savings** 44 percent.

COUNTRY

MARYLAND Extraordinary Eastern Shore from Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay (hyatt.com), a waterfront escape on the Choptank River, an hour and a half from Baltimore. **Stay** Two nights in a standard room. **Bonus** Biking, kayaking, and hiking at the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, home to bald eagles and ospreys. **Cost** \$558 (\$279 per night), double, all-inclusive, March 1–April 30. **Savings** 49 percent.

★ MASSACHUSETTS Birthplace of Liberty from the Inn at Hastings Park (innathastingspark.com), a modern twist on the New England inn 30 minutes from Boston. **Stay** Two nights in a Superior room. **Bonus** A private tour of the Buckman Tavern, a key site during the American Revolution. **Cost** From \$500 (\$250 per night), double, March 22–May 22. **Savings** 30 percent.

★ Newly opened

QUEBEC Chants and Cheeses from Manoir Hovey (manoirhovey.com), a Relais & Châteaux hideaway in picturesque North Hatley, an hour and a half from Montreal. **Stay** Two nights in a Luxury room. **Bonus** Hear monks singing Gregorian chants while touring the 100-year-old St.-Benôit-du-Lac abbey. **Cost** \$850 (\$425 per night), double, through April 30. **Savings** 30 percent.

CULTURE

★ CHINA Dalian Adventure from the opulent Castle Hotel, a Luxury Collection Hotel (luxurycollection.com), in Dalian, a burgeoning seaport on the Liaodong Peninsula. **Stay** Two nights in an Oceanview room. **Bonus** A private four-hour tour of Dalian, including visits to Xinghai Square and the Binhai Road boardwalk. **Cost** \$626 (\$313 per night), double, March 1–April 30. **Savings** 30 percent.

MEXICO CITY Art & Cuisine Discovery from Tia Stephanie Tours (tiastephanietours.com), whose trips put a spotlight on local culture. **Stay** Five nights at the Yabu Pushelberg-designed Las Alcobas. **Bonus** Visit the gallery-filled neighborhoods of Colonia Roma and Condesa with a guide. **Cost** \$1,685 (\$337 per night) per person, double, through December 31, including select meals. **Savings** 30 percent.

ADVENTURE

ECUADOR Wildlife Discovery from Opuntia Eco Journeys & Hotels (opuntiagalapagostours.com), known for its land-based trips throughout the Galápagos Islands. **Stay** Five nights at Iguana Crossing on Isabela Island. **Bonus** Kayak to the neighboring island of San Cristóbal, while watching for frigates and blue-footed boobies. **Cost** \$2,170 (\$434 per night)

per person, quadruple, all-inclusive, March 1–April 30. **Savings** 30 percent.

★ NICARAGUA The Good Life from the Inn at Rancho Santana (ranchosantana.com), a 17-room retreat on the country's rocky Pacific shore. **Stay** Four nights in a standard room. **Bonus** A horseback-riding excursion to the historic village of Limón. **Cost** \$1,000 (\$250 per night), double; book by April 30. **Savings** 30 percent.

SOUTH AFRICA Seascapes and Wildlife from African Travel (africantravelinc.com), expert outfitters for affordable safaris. **Stay** Four nights at the Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa, in Cape Town, and three nights in the bush at Simbambili Game Lodge. **Bonus** A helicopter ride over Table Bay. **Cost** \$4,395 (\$628 per night) per person, double, all-inclusive; book by May 31. **Savings** 30 percent. +



The shingled exterior of a beach house at Rhode Island's Castle Hill Inn.



SPIRIT OF CURIOSITY: GATEWAY CANYONS RESORT&SPA

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CURIOSITY RETREATS INSPIRE THE MIND
AND AWAKEN THE SPIRIT.**



THE SETTING

Discover a destination where the breathtaking natural landscape is matched only by the inspired minds of the world's most visionary thinkers. Attendees at Gateway Canyons' Curiosity Retreats can choose from 72 adobe-style rooms, including suites and private casitas with jaw-dropping Unaweep Canyon views. Many of the Southwest-inspired lodgings offer open-air hot tubs, indoor and outdoor fireplaces, open-beam ceilings, outdoor showers, and stargazing decks under the clear night sky.

THE SPARK

Designed as a forum where the lifelong curious can unite to explore the Universe's most fascinating questions, Curiosity Retreats provide intimate access to visionaries, scholars, and trendsetters. These exclusive five-night escapes dive deep into four main areas of interest: science, technology, civilization, and the human spirit. The inaugural 2014 year consisted of two highly successful, sold-out retreats where participants gathered to explore life's biggest questions.

THIS SUMMER (June 28–July 3, 2015)

Limited to 70 attendees, the 2015 Curiosity Retreat features an unparalleled lineup of global thinkers: David McCullough, Sylvia Earle, Brian Greene, Ted Leonsis, Danielle Allen, Jason Silva, Raj Sisodia, Nancy Andreasen, and Paul Saffo. These experts bring with them a wealth of experience in topics ranging from the wonders of our deep oceans to the future of our digital economy. All told, the 2015 Curiosity Retreat promises to be a thrilling engagement filled with illuminating lectures, lively discussions, and the once-in-a-lifetime experience of interacting with some of the world's greatest minds.

THE STAY

Intellectual stimulation combines with absolute luxury: Curiosity Retreat attendees have their choice of plush accommodations, 14 savory meals of locally inspired fare, 8 one-hour lecture sessions, and 3 intimate precepts with the retreat's featured speakers. Daily excursions and experiences might include exploring the red rock hills by foot or horseback, lounging by the pool, or delighting the senses in afternoon wine tasting. It's all part of the ultimate getaway for the deep-thinking traveler.

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THE IT LIST

There are great new hotels, and then there are game changers. For our 10th annual editors' choice awards, we picked the 43 properties that are transforming their destinations, shining a spotlight here on the 11 most remarkable newcomers.

Read about all the winners at tandl.me/itlist.

2015



The winery at Alexander and Carrie Vik's estate in Millahue, Chile, looks like a concrete-and-glass spaceship touched down amid the lush hills of Chilean wine country, a bit of architectural audacity that is matched by Viña Vik, the retreat they added on the hillside above it last fall. The swirl of titanium that marks its roofline, the room-size Anselm Kiefer in the lounge, the 22 artist-designed rooms (one a trompe l'oeil wonderland, with a riot of azulejo tiles)—the whole place is a feast for the eyes, and thrilling in its originality. A great wine-country hotel doesn't always put you in the middle of the most interesting *terroir*, but this one does: the nearby wineries of the Colchagua Valley are turning out some great vintages, so oenophiles will find plenty to keep them happily occupied. *vik.cl*. \$\$\$\$\$



The term *design hotel* gets tossed around indiscriminately these days, so it's refreshing when a property truly merits the distinction. Such is the case at El Blok, the Caribbean's most stylish new lodgings, on the quiet Puerto Rican island of Vieques. The materials—colorful cement tiles, rubber-and-concrete lamps from Dutch designer Renate Vos, a 25-foot single piece of almond wood that forms the bar—show off the

gorgeous imperfection of the handmade, while perforated concrete louvers shield guest rooms from the afternoon sun and create Matisse-like shadows on the floors. Downstairs, the curves and ovals of the reception area intuitively lead guests to the bar, which faces the beach across the street and flows into the lively open-air restaurant, headed by Jose Enrique, Puerto Rico's star chef. elblok.com. \$\$



ECO-PIONEER
PIKAIA LODGE
GALÁPAGOS
ISLANDS,
ECUADOR

Luxury in the Galápagos Islands took an evolutionary leap with the debut of Pikaia Lodge, the archipelago's first carbon-neutral five-star resort. The setting is spectacular: set along a plateau on Santa Cruz Island, its 14 rooms put the entire lush valley and Pacific coastline on display through floor-to-ceiling windows. But what's most remarkable is that it exists at all. For decades, tourism in the Galápagos has been ruled by boats with rigid itineraries, but Pikaia lets you see the islands by both land and sea (the property owns and operates a private 100-foot yacht), a combination that allows guests to explore with fewer emissions and greater flexibility, whether snorkeling with sea lions or visiting an organic coffee farm. pikaialodge.com. \$\$\$\$



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PHOTOS: (LEFT) ERICA GEORGE DINES; (RIGHT) KRISTINE LARSEN

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SAFARI SHAKE-UP

SANDIBE
OKAVANGO SAFARI
LODGE
BOTSWANA

The Okavango Delta already offered some of the most over-the-top safari experiences in Africa—yet andBeyond has upped the ante with this architecturally stunning camp. Sandibe was rebuilt from the ground up, and reopened last September with 12 cocoon-like suites that hover on stilts above a private floodplain reserve. Each is made with rounded, handwoven cedar, designed after the elaborate nests of the golden weaverbird. Wood-burning fireplaces, private plunge pools, and solar-powered air-conditioning make it easy to forget that you're in the middle of nowhere. Except, of course, when you're being gently woken up by birdsong, or sharing a communal meal by campfire when an elephant saunters by. andbeyond.com. \$\$\$\$



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In Japan's ancient capital, where tradition is prized over novelty, Ritz-Carlton has made a deferential debut with Kyoto's first true luxury hotel. Set along the banks of the serene Kamo River, the low-slung retreat is a kind of modern-day *ryokan*, with Japanese motifs given a contemporary spin: Zen gardens and sleek stone waterfalls fill interior courtyards. Abstract artworks themed after the *Tale of Genji* decorate the 134 guest rooms and public spaces. And the restaurant's superb sushi, teppanyaki, and tempura are served on ceramics made by local artisans. From a river-facing suite, you can watch passing cyclists and schoolchildren hopping stones, or take a short walk to some of the city's most exquisite temples and shrines. ritzcarlton.com. **\$\$\$**

We never knew we wanted to go to Prince Edward County until the arrival of the Drake Devonshire Inn, the Drake Hotel Toronto's ultra-hip country sister. Now the property is turning a sleepy, vineyard-filled corner of Ontario into a buzzy summertime escape. In a converted 19th-century foundry, the 14-room hideaway draws high-profile creative types and weekending Canadians with live music, art installations, and the rustic charms of gabled ceilings, handmade wool throws, and lakeside bonfires. Oenophiles should get excited, too: some of the best Pinot Noir producers in the country are a short drive away, and the Drake's tasting room stocks the region's best bottles. drakedevonshire.ca. **\$\$**



INDIE DARLING
•••
DRAKE
DEVONSHIRE INN
ONTARIO

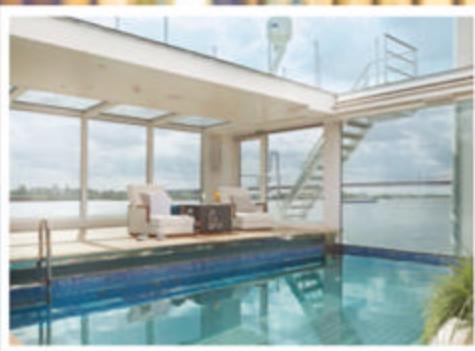


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DEFY THE ELEMENTS

A Day in the Life of a Fisherman

For Ben Weiner, fishing has been a life-long love affair. A commercial fisherman and charter boat operator, Ben's been fishing off the coast of Maine for as long as he's been able to walk—and he wouldn't give it up for anything.

Every morning, Ben's up before dawn, itching to get out on the water. "Whether I'm by myself, or taking clients on a sunrise charter, I just want to get out there and start fishing," says Ben. "I've had more adventures working on the Northern Atlantic than most people have in a lifetime."

Fishing off the coast of Maine is one of the harshest weather environments one can work in.

"When a Nor'easter is driving rain in your face and salt water spray is soaking you over the rail, the last thing you want to worry about is staying dry," Ben explains. To get the job done, he relies on GORE-TEX® outerwear, footwear, and gloves.

"Having the right gear is a huge advantage," he says. "It allows me to focus on the fish, my boat, the clients, or whatever it may be. I just don't have to think about staying warm and dry."



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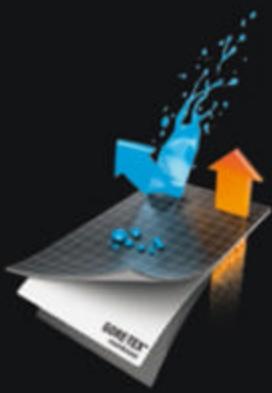
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SCENE MAKER
MIAMI BEACH
EDITION

In any other hotel lobby, you probably wouldn't be caught dead shooting pool on an all-white billiards table mere steps from the front door. But at the Miami Beach Edition, Ian Schrager and Marriott's latest love child, showing off is compulsory. Open gathering spaces ripple through the white-and-gold Yabu Pushelberg lobby, a potted-palm-shaded lounge opening to a glassy cocktail bar that gives way to a market-style café. Downstairs there's a nightclub, a bowling alley, and a pint-size skating rink. Even the round dining room of Jean-Georges' Matador Room restaurant encourages gawking. If some of the 294 rooms seem simple to the point of afterthought, it's hardly a deterrent for Miami's cool crowd, which is flocking to what is hands down the city's hottest address. editionhotels.com. **\$\$\$\$**



COURTESY OF THE MIAMI BEACH EDITION

Checking in anywhere fabulous? Join T+L for a Twitter chat about hotels on Tuesday, March 17, at 2 p.m. EST. Follow @travandleisure and #TL_Chat.



For their latest project in London, Firmdale hoteliers Kit and Tim Kemp have created an entire micro-neighborhood in the middle of Soho—one that still feels so hidden even a London cabdriver might have trouble finding it. Surrounding a tree-lined courtyard are a 91-room hotel, residences, a spa, a movie theater, and boutiques selling hard-to-find international labels. The hotel itself evokes a dapper Londoner's pied-à-terre, with a library anchored by a fireplace and a Joanna Carrington landscape, and an airy restaurant serving seasonal British fare (a chic crowd comes in for afternoon tea, and the place heats up at night). The rooms are a signature Kit Kemp fantasia of pattern, color, and texture, but her most surprising design flourish lies downstairs: an entire bowling alley, circa the 1950s, imported from Texas. hamyardhotel.com. **\$\$\$\$**

THE IT LIST • 2015



STYLE SETTER
• • •
WALDORF ASTORIA
AMSTERDAM

Amsterdam's most sumptuous hotel is a newcomer disguised as a grande dame, tucked into six 17th- and 18th-century patrician houses on posh Herengracht canal. A hand-carved, Louis XIV-style staircase in the lobby sets a regal tone, but the 93 rooms take a more understated approach, with sleek marble fireplaces and subtle touches of the city's famous Delft blue. Nods to tradition aside, these are no old-fashioned accommodations: the Vault Bar draws a fashionable crowd each night for what might be the city's best martini. waldorfastoria.com. **\$\$\$**

Malliouhana was once *the* place to stay on Anguilla—until its buttoned-up vibe and 1980s décor began to wear thin. So we're thrilled that its new managers, Auberge Resorts, have given it a stem-to-stern overhaul and brought back the sense of glamour that had gone missing. The property is less formal but no less luxurious, from the lobby's shimmering new glass-tiled floors to the 44 bright guest rooms, with their yellow-and-white-striped carpets and orange chaise longues. The breezy seaside restaurant got a makeover, too, with just the type of unfussy menu you'd want at the beach: conch-and-spiny-lobster pizza, locally caught tuna *poke*, and tomato-and-watermelon *panzanella*. aubergehotels.com. **\$\$\$\$**



COMEBACK QUEEN
• • •
**MALLIOUHANA,
AN AUBERGE RESORT**
ANGUILLA

A photograph of a man and a woman standing outdoors at sunset. The woman, wearing a bright orange sleeveless dress, is looking down at her hands. The man, in a white suit, is looking at her. They are standing near a stone wall and some greenery. The sun is low in the sky, creating a warm glow.

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A-LIST ESCAPE
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THE BRANDO
FRENCH POLYNESIA

If there's one tropical island we'd fly 5,000 miles for this year, it's Tetiaroa, the speck of French Polynesia that Marlon Brando bought in the 1960s. The late actor's private refuge, a 20-minute flight from Tahiti, has been breathtakingly reimagined as the Brando, a conservationist's Eden. Each of the 35 ultra-private villas (the smallest is 1,000 square feet) was constructed with sustainable local wood, is cooled by seawater-powered air-conditioning, and faces its own secluded beach. There's a palm-shaded spa and a long list of naturalist-guided activities, but the point of the Brando is to do as Brando did: go into hiding, if only for a week. thebrando.com; all-inclusive; three-night minimum. \$\$\$\$\$



IT LIST 2015

For reviews and photos of all 43 winners, visit tandl.me/itlist.

• • •

FAR-FLUNG FANTASIES

- Alila Jabal Akhdar** Oman
Cape Weligama Sri Lanka
Norden Camp Gansu, China
Vana Malsi Estate
Uttarakhand, India
Viña Vik Millahue, Chile
Vines Resort & Spa
Mendoza, Argentina

DESIGN STARS

- Adler Mountain Lodge**
Dolomites, Italy
El Blok Vieques, Puerto Rico
Temple Hotel Beijing

ECO-PIONEER

- Pikaia Lodge**
Galápagos Islands, Ecuador

SAFARI SHAKE-UPS

- Namiri Plains** Tanzania
Sandibe Okavango Safari Lodge
Botswana
Wilderness Safaris Hoanib
Skeleton Coast Camp Namibia

INSTANT CLASSICS

- Aman Tokyo**
Four Seasons Resort
Orlando, Florida
The Norman Tel Aviv
Parc Hyatt New York
The Peninsula Paris
Raffles Istanbul
Ritz-Carlton Kyoto
Rosewood Beijing
Shangri-La Hotel at the Shard
London

INDIE DARLINGS

- Drake Devonshire Inn**
Prince Edward County, Ontario
Hotel La Semilla
Playa del Carmen, Mexico
La Villa Puducherry, India

SCENE MAKERS

- Miami Beach Edition** Florida
Thompson Miami Beach
25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin

NEW URBANISTS

- American Trade Hotel & Hall**
Panama City
Ham Yard Hotel London

STYLE SETTERS

- Andaz Peninsula Papagayo**
Resort Costa Rica
Belle Mont Farm St. Kitts
Hotel Sahrai Fez, Morocco
Sublime Comporta Portugal
Waldorf Astoria Amsterdam

COMEBACK QUEENS

- Four Seasons Hotel The Westcliff**
Johannesburg, South Africa
Hôtel Plaza Athénée Paris
Malliouhana, an Auberge Resort
Anguilla
One&Only Hayman Island Australia
Shelborne Wyndham Grand
South Beach Miami

A-LIST ESCAPES

- The Brando** French Polynesia
Maafushifushi by Como Maldives
Sanchaya Bintan Island, Indonesia

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ACROSS THE ISLANDS

Throughout Hawai'i, magic arrives in the serendipitous moments. On Kaua'i, it might be the beauty you uncover along the one-lane highway to the soul-stirring Nāpali Coast. It could be the discovery of a culinary gem on O'ahu, or a pink-streaked sky at dawn atop Haleakalā volcano on Maui. A journey in an open-air SUV may be your path to the heart of undiscovered Lāna'i or Moloka'i. On Hawai'i Island, you could chance upon a *honu* (Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle) basking on a jet-black beach near Punalu'u. You may find the best parts of your "planned" Hawai'i vacation are the unplanned interludes that you never saw coming.

ARTS + CULTURE

The arts and culture of Hawai'i are just as unique as the islands themselves. A walk through town may uncover a lively *hula* performance. A resort stay might offer the unmatched opportunity of '*ukulele* lessons. A night out might include the sweet and soulful rhythms of the slack key guitar in a nightclub or lounge. And Hawaii's packed, yearlong calendar of festivals and events offers countless ways to celebrate the *aloha* spirit through film, art, food, dance, music, and more.

► Find more ways to #LetHawaiiHappen at gohawaii.com.

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ISLAND GROOVES

The music of Hawai'i is as entrancing as it is diverse—from traditional harmonies with haunting chants and primal percussion, to the upbeat 'ukulele and the soulful slack key guitar. In live music venues across the islands, keep an ear out for uniquely Hawaiian takes on jazz, rock, rap, and even a Hawaiian form of reggae known as Jawaiian.



Hawaii's lively festivals offer a chance to be immersed in the sounds of the islands. On July 19 in O'ahu, the **45th Annual 'Ukulele Festival Hawai'i** will take over Kapiolani Park Bandstand in Waikīkī. A highlight of the free, daylong concert is a 'ukulele orchestra featuring over 800 students. And in September, the **Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Festival** comes to Hawai'i Island, celebrating this unique, loose flowing guitar style.

ART + SOUL

Take a break from the beach to check out venerable museums like the **Bishop Museum** on O'ahu, filled with Hawaiian history, and the **Lahaina Heritage Museum** on Maui, dedicated to the islands' whaling history. Contemporary art is the exciting centerpiece at **Downtown Honolulu's First Friday Art Walk**; and on Kaua'i, the Friday **Art Night in Hanapēpē** showcases local artists' work, from rare Ni'ihiu shell *lei* to handmade jewelry.

[Patricia Flores
Age 47, Loan Officer]

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BIG-SCREEN PARADISE

Across Hawai'i, follow in the footsteps of Hollywood greats. Kaua'i alone is the setting of more than 60 box-office features; some day-trip outfitters offer film location tours that take in many of the island's most breathtaking sites. In June, the **Maui Film Festival** lures audiences for premieres and screenings in the resort towns of Kahului and Wailea. And the **Hawai'i International Film Festival**, held on O'ahu and statewide, brings premieres and festivities to the islands from mid-October to early November.

BEAUTY IN MOTION

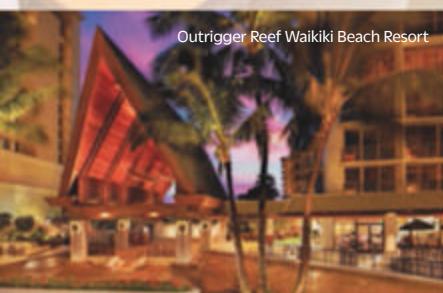
More than just a form of dance, Hawaii's legendary *hula* expresses the exquisite spirit that shines throughout the islands. On Hawai'i Island, the **Merrie Monarch Festival** is a weeklong celebration in April featuring top-flight *hula* competitions, exhibitions, live music, and more. And the quiet island of Moloka'i comes alive in early May with the statewide **Ka Hula Piko Festival**, a day filled with crafts booths, Hawaiian foods, and enchanting *hula*.

CULTURE OF ALOHA

Experience the culture of *aloha* throughout the year. On May 1, join the **Lei Day Celebrations** in Waikīkī, with lei-making contests, pageantry, arts and crafts, and a daylong live concert at Kapi'olani Park Bandstand. The serene island of Lāna'i turns into a party for its yearly **Lāna'i Pineapple Festival** in late June or early July, with pineapple eating and cooking contests, food, music, and fireworks.



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The Kahala Hotel & Resort, a legendary O'ahu hideaway, is a favorite of celebrities, presidents, and international royalty. An exquisite beachfront setting—just 10 minutes from Waikīkī—makes guests feel worlds away, yet close to top-flight shopping and entertainment. The luxurious haven features 338 rooms and suites, five stylish restaurants, a premier spa, and a private lagoon with dolphins. It's a perfect locale for Hawaiian cultural experiences such as complimentary *hula* and 'ukulele lessons, and coconut-frond weaving. KahalaResort.com

Mauna Kea Beach Hotel is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2015 with a year full of themed promotions and events. Mauna Kea Golf Course and Seaside Tennis kicked off the year with special rates and unlimited play; spring focus is all about Kauna'oa Bay (the reason Mauna Kea came to fruition); summer is when the hotel opened, so save the date for the Anniversary Gala on July 24th; and fall will focus on the priceless collection of 1,600 pieces of Asian and Pacific Art. Learn more at TimelessMaunaKea.com



Kā'anapali Beach Hotel welcomes you with the warm spirit of *aloha*. Enjoy Hawaiian touches indoors and out at this idyllic playground set on 11 gorgeous acres of Maui's famed Kā'anapali Beach. KBHmaui.com

Destination Resorts Hawaii offers a premium collection of vacation homes in eight gorgeous condo resorts in Wailea and Makena—including the celebrated and exclusive Wailea Beach Villas. DRHmaui.com

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The title "TRAVEL ADVISORY BOARD" is composed of large, bold letters. The letters "TRAVEL" are a light blue color, while "ADVISORY" and "BOARD" are a darker blue. The background of the letters is filled with a vibrant photograph of a tropical island or coastal area, showing dense green vegetation, rocky cliffs, and the ocean.

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TRAVEL+LEISURE

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In This Issue

- 126 Cuzco, Peru
- 134 Berlin
- 140 Laucala, Fiji
- 146 Washington, D.C.

The entrance to the
San Antonio Abad chapel,
in Cuzco, Peru, page 126.

UP





TO

Cuzco, Peru, is the town that
Machu Picchu built, a home base
for the site's hundreds of
thousands of yearly visitors (and
counting). Now the city is
booming, bringing together past
glories and future possibilities
to create a kind of modern Incan
marvel all its own.

THE MOUNTAIN

By Andrew McCarthy

Photographed by Jesse Chehak

The old woman elbows me in the ribs, hard. She is small, Peruvian, her face heavily creased. Black hair hangs in a braid to the middle of her back. She is without a hat. When I meet her dark eyes she nods in the direction of something over my shoulder. I swing around and see mist, rays of sun, clouds, glistening rain, a rainbow, all mingling, dispersing, re-forming, vanishing, and reconstituting again while racing before the nearly sheer, deep-green mountain face across the valley. I turn back to the woman and we both smile. She has far fewer teeth than I. We sit together on the bench and watch the singular, eternally repeated, show—I don't know for how long.

I hadn't even planned to be at Machu Picchu again. I had experienced the mountaintop Shangri-la with the mysterious past nearly 20 years earlier. I watched dawn break from the Temple of the Sun, I hiked up Huayna Picchu, I sneaked into the ancient citadel at night. I had what I came to understand was a typically memorable experience. And like nearly every foreigner who comes to Machu Picchu, I based myself in the city of Cuzco, almost 75 miles down the Sacred Valley. I had expected to be—and was—awed by Machu Picchu, but Cuzco caught me off guard. Peru at that time was emerging from a long period of insulation: the communists of the Shining Path were still holding out in the mountains around Ayacucho and tourism was not the national engine it has since become. But despite being a sleepy city, Cuzco felt young, vital. I had always wanted to return.

The longest-continuously-inhabited city in South America, Cuzco sits more than 11,000 feet above sea level, high in the Andes. It was the center of the vast Inca Empire in the 15th and early 16th centuries. The arrival of conquistadors, in 1533, changed all that. The Spanish quickly laid siege to the city's riches, squatted there briefly, then moved on to the coast and the newly formed colonial capital of Lima.

Walking the cobblestoned streets today, the past pushes itself up into the present, asserting its

This page, from top: A military band in Cuzco's Plaza de Armas; a view of the plaza from on high. **Opposite:** Fruit vendors at the Mercado San Pedro. **Previous pages:** Saqsaywaman, a historic Incan site overlooking the city.



contemporary relevance. In building after building, intricate and subtle Incan stonework visibly supports more-recent colonial structures. Cuzco is not unique in building upon its distinct cultural phases (think of Seville's wedding of Catholic and Moorish influences), but this melding of ancient Incan and colonial architecture helps give Cuzco an air of mysterious and living antiquity.

The Plaza de Armas was, and still is, the center of life. Colonial arcades frame the landscaped square, surrounded by the sprawling cathedral and its neighboring churches—all built on Incan foundations. Red-and-white Peruvian flags fly beside rainbow-colored banners of Tahuantinsuyo (the Inca Empire). Two decades ago I noted that the Cusqueños took pride in the glory of their Inca heritage—in the intervening years they have learned to market and exploit it.

When I was here the first time, a few storefronts on the fringes of the plaza offered white-water





rafting trips or occasional excursions to the Amazon basin. Now, it is difficult to walk far without being handed a flyer for an “exclusive” tour of the Sacred Valley, or receiving an offer for a massage, or a proposition to get my photo taken with a woman in traditional dress beside a snow-white llama. Five-star hotels converted from monasteries and convents—including the elegant Belmond Palacio Nazarenas, where I’m staying—are now easy to find. There are very few traffic lights, and cars often choke the streets.

“We are a city of 500,000, and growing fast—maybe too fast for my liking,” Cuzco native Carlos Unda Cano tells me. Unda Cano, an affable outdoorsman, is a professor at the Andean University of Cuzco, but like so many here, he also works in the tourist trade, specializing in eco-tours and biking adventures. “When I was a kid, if we saw a blond person we would stop and point. Only alpaca had blue eyes. Now....” He shrugs. “Seventy percent of the people here are directly or indirectly involved in tourism. In the last ten years, high-end tourism has exploded.”

While the top of the market has skyrocketed, most residents of Cuzco live much closer to the ground. Down on Calle Mantas, under yellow streetlamps where the scent of eucalyptus mixes with the smoke of wood-stoked fires, a typical scene plays out. A grouchy woman is working late, adding a savory smell to the night. I buy a bag of her freshly popped corn, then feel someone shadowing me down the street. When I turn, the small boy behind me stops. Our eyes meet. I reach the bag out toward him. Without delay he accepts his prize and is gone into the night.

The contradictions that come with a place at once historically poor and newly prosperous go a long way toward defining Cuzco today. The posh restaurant



WALKING THE COBBLESTONED STREETS TODAY, THE PAST PUSHES ITSELF UP INTO THE PRESENT, ASSERTING ITS CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE.

Left: Tapas at Cicciolina, one of Cuzco's new breed of restaurants.
Right: Once the capital of the Inca Empire, the city sits high in the Andes.









Cicciolina, with artwork adorning the walls and bundles of dried peppers and garlic hanging from exposed beams, serves up delicious trout ceviche and duck prosciutto, while just outside a small woman wearing a bowler hat sits beside an open fire in the gutter, selling fried guinea pig—nose to tail, claws and all—on a stick.

Young street boys lug wooden boxes offer shoeshines to strangers in patent-leather loafers. Weathered women weave on straining wooden looms beside a shop that sells alpaca sweaters for more money than they will earn in a year—or five. Against the wall of the convent of Santa Catalina, an old lady in a colorful poncho sells cigarettes one at a time. And a block away a Range Rover drops off a well-heeled foursome outside Paddy's Pub, where, up a flight of steps, tiny Peruvian women barely able to see above the bar draw pints

of Guinness for an expat crowd watching soccer on a giant flat-screen TV.

On any other day, the same crowd might be sipping cocktails at the sleek Museo del Pisco, more bar than museum.

How to visit
Machu Picchu:
tandl.me/mchpic.

Above, from left:
A bartender at Paddy's Pub; tea at Belmond Palacio Nazarenas hotel.
Opposite: Chinchoro, an Incan site near the city.



It's easy for outsiders to decry a destination that has become a victim of its own success, but as Gabriela Guillen, a Cuzco native and student at the university points out to me, "Cuzco is growing up. It's cool. Maybe we lose some customs." She shrugs. We are sitting at the bar of Norton Rat's, an expat hangout just off the Plaza de Armas. "People pick up customs from foreigners. And we have a cinema now," she says, beaming.

But over at the Mercado San Pedro, there is nothing new. This is where the locals shop—for everything. Pig heads hang in a butcher stall beside a woman selling concoctions that she promises will cure diabetes and arthritis, gastritis and gout. Nearby are barrels of cacao seeds for chocolate. A wire-thin man sags under 10-foot-long stalks of sugarcane he shoves into an antiquated grinder. The vine of the hallucinogen ayahuasca is piled high. Women work sewing machines hard. People sit at makeshift tables and slurp soups and stews prepared on portable stoves by busy men and women. The sensation is one of chaotic familiarity among the regulars—I see no foreigners. Fresh juices from fruits I don't recognize are squeezed and offered in tall glasses. There are love potions for sale, and red *huayruro* seeds for luck. And of course, there is coca leaf.

Any frank discussion of Cuzco—or nearly anywhere in the Andes—must include the coca leaf. I encounter clear plastic bags jammed full of the green leaves in abundance at the Mercado San Pedro and I see respectable-looking men walking down the Avenida El Sol with cheeks puffed out, gnawing on wads of the stuff. Even my refined, American-centric hotel offers arriving guests *maté de coca*, a (Continued on page 164)



BERLIN GROWS UP

THE CITY OF RAKISH CHARMS AND ANYTHING-IS-POSSIBLE ARTISTIC ENERGY HAS LATELY TAKEN ON A NEW GLOSS — WITHOUT LOSING ITS COOL. **ALEXANDRA MARSHALL** VISITS EUROPE'S BOURGEOIS BOHEMIAN UTOPIA. PHOTOGRAPHED BY BÄRBEL SCHMIDT





Clockwise from top left: Street musicians in Mitte; the beer hall Prater Garten, in Prenzlauer Berg; Barn Coffee Roasters; an exhibition at KOW gallery; lunch at Markthalle Neun, in Kreuzberg.

IT WAS BACK IN

the mid 1990s when I first started to hear what a cool place Berlin was. "Cool," meaning that, among the members of my social circle in New York City, the ones with the most interesting tattoos and grants from prestigious arts institutions were running off to live in massive apartments for months in rundown Kreuzberg, in the former West Berlin. They'd come back with stories of creating utopian early-Internet communities or composing blatantly uncommercial music, of spending warm, humid summers bicycling through parks that were more like forests and enjoying extremely low overhead. The all-night techno parties in bombed-out buildings were said to be epic, as if Mom and Dad left town after the Berlin Wall came down and never came back.

Today, Berlin is starting to seem downright grown-up. Having lost most of its city center during World War II, the city will never have the preserved-in-amber beauty of Paris or Amsterdam, but in the last 15 years it's seen a steady upscaling. Districts in the former East, like Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg, still have lovely pastel row houses and brick Bauhaus-style buildings, but their leafy squares, once home to squatters, are now destined for starchitects. In 2013, Daniel Libeskind unveiled plans for an apartment building shaped like a metallic cube, in Mitte, and on nearby Alexanderplatz, Frank Gehry will build Germany's tallest residential complex next to the iconic 1960s TV Tower. And though there are still plenty of pockets littered with graffiti, the "tagging" inside the lobby of Berlin's Soho House is by Damien Hirst.

That's a lot of change in a short time. Many of the older guard had warned me that the city had become impossibly bourgeois. But improvisation, kookily high concepts, and earnestness still typify the creative output here, which imbues its restaurants, hotels, and shops with a freshness that defies been-there-done—that cynicism and an energy that helps drown out the naysayers. Berlin has one of the most youthful populations in Europe and offers a solid argument that risk-taking and originality are as important to a city's well-being as the quaintness of its historic quarter. And Berliners, as I discovered, are embracing change while holding onto their individuality.

"As everything in the world morphs into the same, many question whether there's even a place for a local identity anymore," interior designer Werner Aisslinger told me. With the opening of his 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin in the former West's erstwhile conservative Charlottenburg neighborhood, Aisslinger is defying this notion. Housed in a remodeled white 1957 Modernist landmark building, the space has eccentricity in every corner, starting with the greenhouse theme of the rooftop restaurant, Neni, which looks out over the vast, bushy expanse of the Tiergarten park and the Berlin Zoo. Many of the plants



surrounding the restaurant's tables could end up on your plate, as they're part of a hydroponic micro-garden dreamed up by an urban farming collective. The rooms feature a mix of vintage industrial furniture and rough-hewn copper walls, with stuffed animals on the beds, window-side hammocks, and Do Not Disturb signs with 25 variations on the message. (If THERE'S A MONSTER BEHIND THIS DOOR doesn't suit your mood, then how about ACCESS DENIED?)

Aisslinger commissioned local artists to realize most of these capsule narratives and make visitors and Berliners alike feel welcome. And they do, if the lines out the door waiting for the elevator to take them to the upstairs Monkey Bar are any indication. Many of them will have headed over from Bikini Berlin next door, which, in typical Berlin style, combines a high-design shopping space with rotating pop-ups and slick offices. The small, box-size stores there are available for three- to six-month leases, and longer-term residents include the cutting-edge boutique Andreas Murkudis and Gestalten, an art-book publisher and shop. The next great hybrid shop that will open is the Store, on the ground floor of Soho House in Mitte, with clothing by designers like Junya Watanabe and Jil Sander, contemporary furniture, an organic café, a co-working space, and a barber shop. Why be just one thing?

ONE WAY TO KNOW when a city feels poised to enter the big leagues is when it sets up a Fashion Week. Berlin's first, in 2007, wasn't ready for prime



Clockwise from top left: In Tempelhofer Freiheit park; a Berliner near Rosenthaler Platz; La Soupe Populaire; Street Food Thursday at Markthalle Neun; Baltic Sea salmon with citrus fruits and cauliflower at Pauly Saal.



Join Alexandra Marshall for a Twitter chat about Berlin on March 24 at 11 a.m. EDT. Follow [@travlandleisure](#), [@AlexMABroad](#), and [#TL_Chat](#).



KAVITA MEELU

The Street Food
Thursday co-organizer
at Markthalle Neun.

SVENJA SPECHT
Reality Studio's head
fashion designer
at her studio in Berlin.

IMPROVISATION, KOOKILY HIGH CONCEPTS, AND EARNESTNESS TYPIFY THE CREATIVE OUTPUT.

time, but now the event, held every January and July, draws global fashion media fascinated as much by Berlin's scene as by what walks down the runways. German designer Svenja Specht, who has participated in the shows, puts out two beautifully constructed collections a year under the name Reality Studio. "There are a lot of international influences in the city now, which makes the creative scene and the shopping much more interesting," she told me. "But Berliners are still under a lot of pressure to keep prices low. I can understand the nostalgia for things not to be so polished, but do we want to be stuck in it forever?" Inspired by her years studying art and working in Beijing, Specht designs clothes that are minimalist and sculptural, using high-quality fabrics. At Baerck, a boutique with a stylish mix of Berliner, French, and Scandinavian designers, her Asian-inspired bomber jackets in Japanese silk and paper-bag-waisted trousers pop off the racks. If polish is a problem, there's no evidence of that here.

In cities like New York or London, derelict spaces do not remain so for long, but given the sheer number of them in Berlin and the turbulent history they reflect, there is a movement among local developers to work with them rather than knock them down and start over. Nowhere is this approach more clearly expressed than at the Neues Museum, where David Chipperfield Architects put the contemporary into direct conversation with history. They took the existing 19th-century Neoclassical structure, which had been sitting empty, half-destroyed during the war, and restored its original volume and layout, while adding understated galleries and a modular inner concrete shell. (The firm has won the commission to restore the existing Mies

van der Rohe-designed New National Gallery, too, which is scheduled to reopen in 2019.)

Architect Arno Brandlhuber is another believer in minimal intervention, best known for his firm's translucent-polycarbonate-fronted office in Mitte, which also houses the fashion magazine *032c* and KOW contemporary art gallery. When Brandlhuber began building the concrete structure on top of existing foundations in 2007, the neighborhood had none of the artisanal cafés and boutiques it does today. When I visited his studio, which is lorded over by a striped house cat, his associate Tobias Höning told me how a couple of years ago, at the same time that land values in Mitte were skyrocketing, Brandlhuber was asked to create an art installation for KOW. He simply filled up the basement with water to mimic the state of the site when he first began construction, a wistful reminder of the past.

BERLIN'S IDEALISM extends to its burgeoning food scene, too. Anywhere else, the gastropub Katz Orange, which serves local wild game, might be content to remain a casual-glamorous hangout for upscale locals and traveling off-duty movie





WERNER AISSLINGER

The designer of 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin at the property's rooftop restaurant, Neni.

stars. (Zachary Quinto sat one table over from mine, and Lou Reed used to frequent it, too.) But here, the young owner, Ludwig Cramer-Klett, wanted to express his commitment to sustainable agriculture, and so he added the Contemporary Food Lab, an event space for workshops by farmers, scientists, and artists.

At Bötzow Brewery, a 250,000-square-foot behemoth that dates back to 1885, there is now a cavernous art gallery, a blue-lit craft-cocktail bar, and a bistro by Tim Raue, La Soupe Populaire, which serves German comfort food and is decorated in the city's omnipresent flea-market-industrial mix. "I'm not doing foam sausages here," Raue said to me. "My dishes are pure Berlin," albeit rendered with sophistication. That means a luscious version of *Königsberger Klopse*, the famous veal meatballs in cream sauce, alongside mashed potatoes and beets—the same dish Raue served to the Obamas on their most recent visit to Germany.

At Reinstoff, Daniel Achilles divides his menu between "far away" concoctions of Asian and international inspiration and "quite near" dishes, including grilled pike with thickened watercress juice and apples, and catfish with a quail egg and Jerusalem artichokes. The restaurant's exposed brick and contemporary light sculptures are clubby and informal, much like the ceramic tiles and leather banquets at Pauly Saal, the other very buzzed-about restaurant right now, with its cleaned-up interpretations of hearty German

fare and more than 800 wines in the cellar.

Seasoned travelers recognize this highly-thought-out, produce-conscious approach to native cuisine in urban centers around the world, but it's still relatively new in Berlin, as are those other objects of culinary fascination, food trucks and fairs. Street Food Thursday at Markthalle Neun, in Kreuzberg, is the brainchild of Kavita Meelu, a London transplant who arrived five years ago with a marketing

background and a desire to break into food. She had planned on staying only a couple of months, but saw an opening: "The creative and rebellious personality of Berlin wasn't being reflected in the culinary scene," she said, "and there were so many immigrants with ideas and stories." We met on the last night of her monthlong pop-up, Bar Market, where she had been hosting close to a thousand people a night for craft cocktails and small-batch wines. But it's her work developing Street Food Thursday that has given the city somewhere to be one night a week. Within an hour of opening, the space was flooded with hungry visitors sampling ramen by the Californian-Korean duo Mr. Susan, barbecue from the German-Italian Big Stuff Smoked Barbecue, and beers from local brewery Heidenpeters. The smiles were broad as they immersed themselves in the new tastes of home. +

T+L Guide

Getting There

Lufthansa and United offer nonstop flights to Berlin from New York City.

Getting Around

Berlin's public transit system, which includes the U-Bahn and S-Bahn, is fast and convenient. Taxis are also plentiful and easy to hail.

STAY

Das Stue das-stue.com. \$\$
Hotel Adlon Kempinski kempinski.com. \$\$
Soho House Berlin sohohouseberlin.com. \$\$
25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin 25hours-hotels.com. \$

EAT

Barn Coffee Roasters thebarn.de. \$\$
Katz Orange katzorange.com. \$\$\$
La Soupe Populaire lasoupepopulaire.de. \$\$\$
Pauly Saal paulysaal.com. \$\$\$
Prater Garten pratergarten.de. \$\$
Restaurant Reinstoff reinstoff.eu. \$\$\$

DO

KOW kow-berlin.info.
Markthalle Neun markthalleneun.de.
Neues Museum smb.museum.
Tempelhofer Freiheit thf-berlin.de.

SHOP

Baerck baerck.net.
Bikini Berlin bikiniberlin.de.
The Store thestore-berlin.com.

An aerial photograph of a private island, likely Laucala, showing a runway strip surrounded by dense tropical vegetation and a clear turquoise lagoon. The sky above is filled with scattered white clouds.

On a jungle-shrouded private
island in Fiji, a reclusive billionaire
has created what may be the world's
most extravagant resort. Is Laucala
for real? PETER JON LINDBERG reports
from a most improbable paradise.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOHN LAURIE

OUT OF THE BLUE



Laucala staffer Siti Tawalili aboard the resort's traditional Fijian *camakau* sailing canoe. **Opposite:** The island's private airstrip.

U UPPOSE YOU WERE TO BUILD YOUR OWN RESORT—ON A REMOTE FIJIAN ISLAND, SAY—AND MONEY WERE NO OBJECT.

Common sense not a factor, either. Maybe you don't even need people to come. Maybe you'd be content to use the place yourself, with the occasional paying guest, and only a distant chance that someday you'll break even. What might that place look like? And what would you put there?

Perhaps you'd put in an 18-hole golf course, then hire a team of 32 just to maintain it. You could add a couple of restaurants—no, how about *five* restaurants?—that would each stay open every night. You'd want a state-of-the-art airstrip and a pair of planes trimmed in leather and burled mahogany. Definitely a marina or two. And maybe there's another island a mile west, where you'd build an entire village from scratch just to house your staff, using three ferries to shuttle them back and forth.

If you're really feeling ambitious, you could add a 240-acre farm with plots growing six varieties of mango and 10 types of tomato; orchards of avocado, papaya, and passion fruit; flocks of Fijian sheep and heirloom chickens; and your very own herd of Wagyu cattle. Of course the island would be covered in coconut palms, all bursting with fruit—so much of it that the spa would make its own line of coconut-based massage oils, and butlers could even draw guests a bath of coconut milk.

But why stop there? Maybe you could buy a submarine—an actual submarine, straight out of a Tintin comic!—for surreal rides among the rays and reef sharks and hawksbill turtles right offshore. (Clincher: there'd be no extra charge for sub rides.)

If all this sounds like your kind of crazy, then you're going to love Laucala.

LOCATED IN FIJI'S NORTHERN ARCHIPELAGO, an hour's flight from Nadi International Airport, Laucala (pronounced "lo-THA-la") is a 3,500-acre private island that might as well be a private alternate universe. It is the brainchild of Austrian billionaire Dietrich Mateschitz, cofounder of Red Bull energy drinks. He bought the island in 2003 from the estate of Malcolm Forbes, who'd used it as a personal getaway since 1972. (Forbes's ashes are buried on the island, under the inscription WHEN ALIVE, HE LIVED.)

Building off the Forbes estate—set within a former coconut plantation—Mateschitz spent five years and untold millions creating a 25-key, ultra-luxe resort.

Laucala finally opened in 2008, charging rates only a mogul (or Mateschitz himself) could afford. Villas—which come with free-form infinity pools, private dining pavilions, and hulking stone bathtubs, each as big as a sarcophagus—start at \$4,600 per night, all-inclusive, though about half are priced between \$6,600 and \$9,600. (The three-bedroom Hilltop Residence goes for \$44,000 a night, which could explain why in six years it's been booked only a handful of times.)

For all the man-made excess, Laucala's natural beauty is equally extravagant. Most of the island is given over to jungle-draped volcanic peaks; forests of pandanus, sandalwood, and mahogany; coastal mangroves; and long, empty beaches framed by lagoons and the sparkling Koro Sea beyond. Abundant tropical foliage—frangipani, heliconia, torch ginger—means Laucala is especially rich in birdlife, including white-collared kingfishers, collared lorises, and the rarely glimpsed orange dove, with plumage like a ripe persimmon. It is, in short, exactly the island you'd choose if you were looking to buy one yourself.

Mateschitz is among a small group of island-owning impresarios that includes the late Laurance Rockefeller, Richard Branson, David Copperfield, and Larry Ellison. Unlike those men and their islands, Mateschitz keeps an exceedingly low public profile, and Laucala operates with a seemingly total disregard for profit. If non-Austrians know the name, it's likely because Mateschitz was the moneymen behind skydiver Felix Baumgartner's 23-mile leap from near-space in 2012. Or because he owns four soccer clubs, a NASCAR team, and two Formula One teams. (He also collects vintage airplanes.) The 70-year-old has a Bransonian flair for adventure and expensive toys along with an air of mystery befitting Charles Foster Kane.

Mateschitz has always been a business iconoclast. Ignoring market research that said Red Bull tasted terrible, he forged ahead and built an empire. To Laucala he's brought the same damn-the-torpedoes attitude. For its first few years, Laucala hovered quietly under the radar, as its publicity-shy





The Pool Bar and lagoon-style swimming pool at Laucala, above. From far left: A pig at the island's organic farm; a cordyline plant; inside the Peninsula Villa; a performance by Laucala staff; one of the three greenhouses.



A beachfront Seagrass Villa, above. **From left:** Laucala horse groomer Wani Pita Joni on one of the resort's Fijian horses; *Rere Ahi*, the resort's teak-and-kauri sailboat; island-grown products at the spa; the living room of the Overwater Villa; chef Anthony Healy inspecting a soursop tree in the garden.



owner seemed to prefer. Lately, however, the resort has gained exposure and momentum as Mateschitz has bankrolled extensive upgrades to the property and made some flashy acquisitions, like that \$1.85 million submarine. Last year, he even coaxed Aman Resorts' longtime director of operations, Andrew Thomson, to come aboard as general manager. (It's a homecoming of sorts for Thomson, a fifth-generation Fijian.)

Why the sudden amping-up of ambition? Perhaps Laucala's patron realized that it would take even more money, and a bit more horn-blowing, to rise above the scores of luxury beach resorts in the world—or at least to justify prices that are two to three times more than they charge. (Only North Island, in the Seychelles, with villas averaging \$6,700 a night, comes close to Laucala.) Or perhaps it's just that Dietrich Mateschitz doesn't do half measures. "He wants this to rank among the finest resorts on the planet," Thomson said of his new boss. "And he's sparing no expense in making that happen."

The numbers would make an unseasoned GM blush. Laucala employs a staff of 385, including 32 full-time gardeners, five dedicated coconut pickers, and a team of seven to attend to the island's 32 pools. (For those counting at home, that's a staff-to-guest ratio of 8 to 1. And this assumes all villas are occupied, which is almost never the case.) The property makes its own honey, tamarind jam, and lemongrass candles; raises pigs and quail and ducks and the aforementioned Wagyu beef; even grows its own orchids—3,500 of them—in a vast greenhouse. Fully 85 percent of Laucala's food is produced on-island.

It is not, on the surface, an altogether rational endeavor. Laucala is rather like something you might have hallucinated in a fever dream after a long night guzzling Red Bull—and then, to your accounting team's mounting alarm, went ahead and built.

SO WHO ACTUALLY GOES TO LAUCALA? The week my wife and I visited, the guest list was like the setup for a joke: two

Here, you can believe you're invited houseguests on the island of the lotus-eaters, residents of a sovereign principality governed only by the rule of Yes.

honeymooning Kuwaitis (they were 22, if that), a Russian couple celebrating their anniversary, two regal-looking Germans, and a group of Hong Kong traders who'd heard about Laucala from Steve—son of Malcolm—Forbes himself. "Steve and I had lunch, and he suggested we come," one of them told us. "Though apparently even he can't afford it anymore." (We paid a press rate, which made it a whole lot more affordable.)

The week prior, I learned, one villa had been occupied by a couple from Kazakhstan, who were dismayed to learn that Laucala's 3,800-foot airstrip could not accommodate their private jet. (It was a 767.) Reluctantly, they consented to park the plane in Nadi and ride Laucala's seven-seat Beechcraft turboprop to the island.

It's not all oligarchs, emirs, or oil barons from former Soviet republics; the majority of Laucala's guests are in fact Americans, albeit extremely rich ones. But in truth, one seldom encounters other guests. The resort's 25 villas are widely spread out across the north coast—along the beach, on a forested plateau, or on private seaside bluffs—and well concealed from their neighbors. We saw our housekeepers (who came three times a day, delivering fresh-squeezed juices, fruit platters, and canapés at each visit) more than we saw the Kuwaitis, Germans, and Hong Kongers. That left only the Russians, to whom we spoke just once. Turns out they'd been married at Laucala the year before, and planned to return for every anniversary. They'd invited no friends or family to the wedding, the wife told us, only a crew of six videographers to document their every move. For a week.

If you're bent on filming your own reality show, Laucala offers dozens of stage sets you might have all to yourselves. Like the Rock Lounge bar, a cliff-top aerie with miles-long views from chaises clustered around a fire pit. At any other resort, this bar would be packed all night long. But every evening that we stopped in for cocktails, we were the only guests. Joeli Vuadreu, the lone bartender, was always comically excited to see us. "It gets a bit lonely," he admitted

while polishing the glassware for what must have been the 19th time; there are weeks when Vuadreu hardly sees a soul. Yet each night he shows up for work, wipes down the teak bar top, cues up the music, and lights the torches and the fire pit, on the off chance someone might show up.

This sort of practice would drive a corporate efficiency expert nuts—but then Laucala is the furthest thing from efficient. A normal hotel, for instance, might ask if certain projects are worthwhile. Is it a sensible investment of time and resources to plant an orchard of 50 vanilla vines, which now require a Laucala staffer to spend several hours each morning pollinating hundreds of flowers by hand, using a toothpick? But such questions—*Is this worth doing? Should we even bother?*—do not apply here. At Laucala, the default answer is: Of course.

ANTHONY HEALY, LAUCALA'S EXECUTIVE CHEF, showed us the vanilla-pollination trick himself. It (Continued on page 162)



CAPITAL



Innovative chefs and bartenders—along with a wave of new residents—are shaking up Washington, D.C.'s restaurant scene, proving there's more to the Beltway than boring steak houses and stuffed shirts. **BY FRANCINE MAROUKIAN**

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARCUS NILSSON

DINING



This page: Grilled octopus with potato-and-caper salad at Estadio, chef Haidar Karoum's Spanish-influenced restaurant.
Opposite: The U.S. Capitol, as seen from the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial.



Clockwise from top left: Chef Michael Friedman of the Red Hen; Estadio, in Logan Circle; pork-belly bocadillo at Estadio; Sundovich, a lunch spot in Shaw; the "Istanbul" sandwich, made with ground beef and lamb, at Sundovich; Del Campo, near Chinatown.

Washington, D.C., always takes its cues from its Resident in Chief. And since the Obamas have been in town, D.C. has been riding a wave of energy, with millennials, who helped put the administration in office, moving to the metro area in big numbers. Cranes now hover over a boomtown skyline, and gentrification is sweeping through inner-city neighborhoods, bringing with it new businesses—and new restaurants. A host of pioneering chefs, bartenders, and entrepreneurs caters to D.C.'s fresh faces, who refuse to settle for the bland, lobbyist-filled steak houses and diplomat-packed French dining rooms that used to define the city's cuisine.

DOMESTIC POLICY

As you might expect in the nation's capital, there are many distinct takes on classic American fare here, with chefs sourcing crops and livestock from across the mid-Atlantic region—and giving traditional techniques a modern spin. Leading the charge is the **Red Hen**. With its leather-topped bar, brick walls, and wood-fired-grill aroma, it has become a fixture in Bloomingdale, a front-stoop neighborhood lined with Victorian row houses. The restaurant updates its menu and wine list seasonally, but chef Michael Friedman always includes throwbacks to the red-sauce joints of his Jersey youth, like house-made rigatoni in a fennel-sausage ragù or a chicken fra diavolo punched up Sicilian-style



Clockwise from top left: Iron Gate's patio; chicken fra diavolo at the Red Hen; Stephen Starr's French brasserie, Le Diplomate; kimchi ramen at Toki Underground; Eat the Rich, known for its oysters; sumac roasted potatoes at Iron Gate.

with fiery red chiles, preserved lemons, and currants. Sommelier Sebastian Zutant presides over a well-edited wine list heavy on old-world bottles.

Just south in the Penn Quarter is the **Partisan**, restaurateur Michael Babin's haven for carnivores, where the meat comes from farms in places like Virginia and Pennsylvania's Lancaster County. (You can also buy it from the Red Apron, his butcher shop next door.) The expansive charcuterie menu is divided into categories like "bright" (Thai-basil-cured *bresaola* beef) and "herbal and floral" (orange-basil pork rillettes). Nearby, in the historically African American neighborhood of Shaw, award-winning bartender Derek Brown plays off D.C.'s ties to the South at **Southern Efficiency**. More than 50 domestic whiskeys complement a compact menu of lesser-known regional

specialties like Virginia peanut soup and "country captain," a one-pot chicken stew infused with curry—a reference to the British-colonial spice trade. **Eat the Rich**, another Shaw success story from Brown, specializes in hearty seafood dishes like fish chowder with steamed clams and Chesapeake oysters that arrive at just the right temperature to enhance their flavor without a hint of splintered shell (what the pros call "shrapnel"). And to help diners get in touch with their inner longshoreman, Brown sends out 32-ounce pitchers of cocktails (try Drink the Martini, made with local Green Hat Gin).

A few blocks away, **Seasonal Pantry** acts as a neighborhood market by day, and a ticket-only restaurant with a 12-seat communal table by night. Chef-owner Daniel O'Brien draws inspiration from vintage community



The team behind Toki Underground (from left): Sous-chef Howard Chang, chef-owner Erik Bruner-Yang, and beverage director Colin Sugalski.

THE NEW D.C. ESTABLISHMENT

Del Campo
777 I St. NW;
delcampodc.com. \$\$\$

Eat the Rich
1839 Seventh St. NW;
etbar.com. \$\$

Estadio
1520 14th St. NW;
estadio-dc.com. \$\$

Iron Gate
1734 N St. NW;
irongaterestaurantdc.com. \$\$\$

Le Diplomate
1601 14th St. NW;
lediplomatedc.com. \$\$\$

Mockingbird Hill
1843 Seventh St. NW;
drinkmoresherry.com. \$\$

The Partisan
709 D St. NW;
thepartisando.com. \$\$\$

Rasika
633 D St. NW;
rasikarestaurant.com. \$\$\$

Red Hen
1822 First St. NW;
theredhendc.com. \$\$\$

Seasonal Pantry
1314½ Ninth St. NW;
seasonalpantry.com.\$\$\$\$

The Source
575 Pennsylvania Ave. NW;
wolfgangpuck.com.\$\$\$\$

Southern Efficiency
1841 Seventh St. NW;
whiskeyhome.com. \$\$

Sundevich
1314 Ninth St. NW;
sundevich.com. \$\$

Toki Underground
1234 H St. NE;
tokiunderground.com. \$\$

Two Birds One Stone
1800 14th St. NW;
2birds1stonedc.com. \$

cookbooks to create nostalgic dishes that lodge in your memory, like house-made brioche stuffed with bacon, caramelized-onion waffles topped with spiced maple syrup, and duck pot pie served with smoked breast, turnips, and crispy skin on the side. Plan ahead: seats become available one month in advance.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

D.C. entertains people from around the world, and thanks to its role as global host, the ethnic-restaurant scene is both authentic and innovative. This wasn't the case 26 years ago, when New Delhi native Ashok Bajaj opened his first venture, the Bombay Club, and had to distribute cards to get customers in the door. That all changed after a 1993 visit from President Clinton sparked citywide interest; today, Bajaj runs eight restaurants, including the popular **Rasika**, in the Penn Quarter. With its dark-wood floors, tangerine accents, and curtain of hanging Belgian crystals tipped in ruby red, the place glows—and so do the dishes, prepared by 2014 James Beard Award winner Vikram Sunderam, which feature the rich, round flavors of sophisticated Indian cuisine. Don't miss the *palak chaat*, the house specialty of crisp fried baby spinach with yogurt, tamarind, and dates, which is simultaneously earthy and airy.

At the minimalist **Del Campo** a few blocks north, near Chinatown, chef Victor Albisu's passion for asado, Argentina's answer to barbecue, transforms the standard steak house into a personal statement. Albisu, who at the age of 10 was already working the butcher's saw in his mother's Latin American market in Virginia, has incredible control over his meat, cooking it rare while getting crisp edges. With vegetables, he grills one side beyond caramelization—burnt, not burned.

Due east in the still-gritty H Street corridor, chef Erik Bruner-Yang looked to his family's heritage in creating **Toki Underground**, a Taiwanese noodle shop perched 32 steps above street level. Locals queue up to get into the tiny, quirky dining room, where the counter footrests are fashioned from discarded skateboard decks. The menu is equally economical: five ramen bowls with add-ons for freestylers, plus Yang's cross-cultural dessert of warm chocolate-chip cookies on a bed of red-miso buttercream—velvety sweet with just the right touch of weird.

A few miles west at **Estadio**, a standout on the 14th Street restaurant strip in Logan Circle, chef Haidar Karoum serves twists on traditional Spanish dishes, like a deceptively simple *tortilla española* of creamy layered eggs and potatoes set off by sherry-vinegar-doused roasted peppers, and *bacalao crudo* with jalapeño, avocado, orange, and olive oil.

On weekends, the **Source**, adjacent to the Newseum, just off the National Mall, is the place to go for brunch. The stars of chef Scott Drewno's inventive dim sum menu are the delicate chive-and-*kurobuta*-pork dumplings and puffy *bao* buns wrapped around lacquered Pennsylvania-

farmed duck, served hot and fresh at the table—no more waiting until the carts roll by.

Sundevich, a casual spot north on Naylor Court, has a similar cult following. The sandwiches are named for the cities their flavors represent: you can travel from "Seoul" (*bulgogi* beef, kimchi, greens, garlic mayo) to "Buenos Aires" (grilled steak, *chimichurri*, sautéed onions) in the course of a single meal.

VISITING DIGNITARY

No other out-of-towner has been welcomed into the fold quite like Philadelphia restaurateur Stephen Starr, who rolled into D.C. in 2013 with his French brasserie, **Le Diplomate**. Starr reportedly spent more than \$6 million to renovate a defunct dry cleaner and wound up with an instant institution. Soon after the doors opened in Logan Circle, city councilman Jack Evans launched his mayoral campaign here, saying it symbolized the revitalization of the city. It also represents the new Washington in its thoroughly democratic approach. No matter who's at the table—whether the First Lady, Vice President Biden, or Secretary Kerry—there's something for everyone. From perfectly crusted baguettes and Gruyère omelettes to onion soup, it's a menu of crowd favorites.

THE COCKTAIL CAUCUS

In this town, political debates grow more spirited when the drinks are well crafted. At the subterranean bar **Two Birds One Stone**, over on the U Street corridor, whitewashed walls and splashes of cool lighting conjure up an Aegean nightspot—a welcome change from the city's ubiquitous dark speakeasies. Weekly drink menus (with ink and pencil cartoons drawn by bar director Adam Bernbach) include a punch of the day and a grappa cocktail with bitters, lemon juice, and honey, served in mismatched vintage glasses. In Shaw, Derek Brown has another hit on his hands with **Mockingbird Hill**, which serves 80 different sherries alongside cured hams like Surryano, a local version of Spain's famous *jamón serrano* from third-generation Virginia cure master Sam Edwards. During the day, the bar turns into a coffeehouse offering seasonal brews and tasting flights consisting of three beans or blends.

Housed in historic Spanish-style stables in Dupont Circle, Michael Babin's **Iron Gate** is dramatically set off by a path of lanterns leading from the sidewalk to the enclosed carriageway bar. Inside, you'll find craft cocktails and a taverna-style menu from chef Anthony Chittum, whose love of Mediterranean coastal cooking shows up in dishes like peppery roasted Sicilian olives and baked Chincoteague oysters with a spanakopita-style topping. With its long zinc counter and low lighting, the bar has become one of D.C.'s most atmospheric destinations for drinks—before, after, or instead of dinner. •



An installation by Italian set designer Pier Luigi Pizzi outside Opera di Firenze.



Splashy hotel openings, updated artisan boutiques, and world-class cultural institutions are breathing new life into the Renaissance city. Valerie Waterhouse takes a closer look.

Photographed by Andrea Wyner

STAY

SHOP

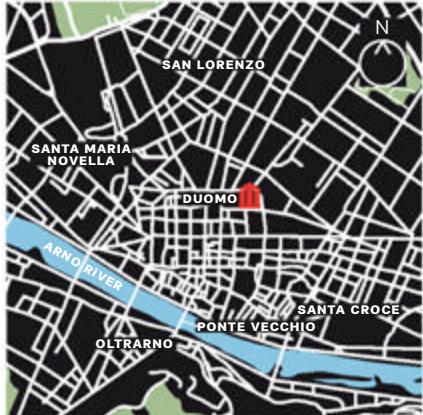
SEE+DO

EAT

LOCAL TAKE



Our Definitive Guide to **Florence**



Lay of the Land

Centro Storico

The city's historic district is filled with art museums and Renaissance churches, along with homegrown luxury brands like Gucci.

San Lorenzo

This maze of streets between the San Lorenzo Market and the Santa Maria Novella train station has been re-energized thanks to the addition of Mercato Centrale, a food lover's dream.

Santa Croce & Sant'Ambrogio

Authentic trattorias and sidewalk cafés line the narrow lanes of these two neighborhoods, where university kids hang out.

Oltrarno

On the Arno River's south bank, this lesser-known quarter has artisan workshops, galleries, and a nightlife scene around Piazza Santo Spirito.

Piazza di Santa Maria Novella

This central square is home to the just-opened Museo Novecento and the popular Officina Profumo Farmaceutica di Santa Maria Novella, a 400-year-old pharmacy that sells traditional elixirs.



The penthouse at Portrait Firenze. **Right:** A room at the St. Regis.

Stay

Our picks of the city's top hotels, from the most buzzed-about openings to longtime favorites.

PORTRAIT FIRENZE

Inspired by 1950s Florence, the Ferragamo family's latest hotel is done in shades of lilac and gray, with vintage photographs of stars like Richard Burton on the city streets. lungarnocollective.com. \$\$\$

PALAZZO GUICCIARDINI

One of the few hotels in Oltrarno, this 15th-century palazzo has just eight rooms with wall paintings depicting Italian landmarks. Other details we love: the hawthorn soaps by Fattoria di Belcanto and the classical music in the lobby. palazzoguicciardini.com. \$\$

SOPRARNO SUITES

A former designer for London's Fortnum & Mason recently opened this intimate inn. The 11 colorful rooms mix contemporary elements, like calligraphy throw pillows by British artist Carolyn Quartermaine, with original 19th-century frescoes. soprano suites.com. \$\$

FOUR SEASONS

Hidden in an 11-acre park, this is the city's first true resort property. A grand villa and former convent house the 116 rooms, which look out onto a lush garden. The spacious spa is a rarity for hotels in Florence. fourseasons.com. \$\$\$\$

J.K. PLACE

This chic town-house hotel puts a premium on service, with a staffer for every guest. Designer Michele Bonan outfitted the 20 rooms with marble fireplaces and classical sculptures. Come evening, head to the rooftop terrace—the perfect spot for a pre-dinner cocktail. jkplace.com. \$\$\$

ST. REGIS

Antique Murano chandeliers and restored 16th-century frescoes fill the public spaces at the St. Regis, in Centro. Don't miss dinner at the hotel's Michelin-starred Winter Garden restaurant. stregisflorence.com. \$\$\$\$



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From left: Stefano Bemer's workshop; a handloom at Antico Setificio Fiorentino.



Shop



These authentic shops showcase the city's long tradition of craftsmanship.

1 Now owned by Gucci, the 18th-century **Richard Ginori** (richardginori1735.com) is the ultimate source for high-end porcelain tableware. Look for 1940s patterns by Gio Ponti, available in 10 different color combinations.

2 Housed in a 15th-century former stable, **AquaFlor Firenze** (florenceparfum.com) stocks nearly 100 scents created by master perfumer Sileno Cheloni. Snap up a bottle of Corps Diplomatique, with notes of frankincense, lemon, vetiver, and musk.

3 At **Antico Setificio Fiorentino** (anticosetificiofiorentino.com), you'll find exquisite silks—*ermisino*, *lampasso*, *brocatelli*, and more—made on antique handlooms.

4 Tommaso Melani sells ready-to-wear oxfords, derbies, loafers, and brogues at his small shoe store, **Stefano Bemer** (stefanobemer.com). Actor Daniel Day-Lewis was so impressed with the shop that he signed on as an apprentice for eight months in the late nineties.

5 In the monastery of the Santa Croce church, **Scuola del Cuoio** (scuoladelcuoio.com) has been crafting leather bags since the 1950s. Best bet: the Baulettino, a pillbox-style tote with a tassel zipper.



See + Do

Four fresh looks at Florentine culture.

1 Florence's only modern-art museum, the **Museo Novecento** (museonovecento.it) debuted last summer and chronicles 100 years of Italian painting, with works by top artists like Lucio Fontana and Giorgio Morandi. **2** Local entrepreneur Umberto Montano recently reopened the long-abandoned first floor of the **Mercato Centrale** (mercatocentrale.it), which spotlights roughly 14 high-end producers. Ricottas from Franco Parola, pine-nut gelato from Cristian Beduschi, and handmade tortellini from Raimondo Mendolia are three standouts. **3** The iconic **Uffizi Gallery** (polomuseale.firenze.it) continues to expand its collection, having recently restored five galleries. Among its vast holdings are paintings by 15th-century Italian masters like Andrea Mantegna and Giovanni Bellini, as well as ancient Roman sculptures. **4** The bold, new rectilinear **Opera di Firenze** (operadifirenze.it) has three performance spaces, including a 2,000-seat open-air theater for warm summer nights. A highlight: *The Tempest*, on view this month.

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26. The Great State of Texas traveltex.com

27. Santa Fe Tourism santafe.org **800.777.2489**

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 Join our Twitter chat about Italy on March 10 at 2 p.m. EST. Follow @travandleisure and #TL_Chat.



Eat

Left: At the pizzeria Sud, in the Mercato Centrale. **Below:** Osteria de L'Ortolano.



Where to dine in Florence now.

LE FATE

This vegan restaurant in the middle of Florence is both a surprising find and one of the best new places to eat.

The menu is inspired by the signs of the zodiac, with crowd-pleasers like spaghetti with almond purée, fennel, lemon, and dried apricot. ristoranteveganolefate.it. **\$\$\$**

OSTERIA DE L'ORTOLANO

Until recently, this gourmet shop run by husband-and-wife team Massimo Zetti and Marta Mezzetti had remained unchanged since the 1960s. Last year, the owners converted the store's two intimate rooms into a casual mom-and-pop osteria serving traditional

Tuscan dishes. Try the chickpea soup with crispy bacon, followed by the *chitarrine ai tre ragù*, angel hair pasta with three sauces. osteriadellortolano.it. **it. \$\$**

LA BOTTEGA DEL BUON CAFFÉ

This creative restaurant just relocated to Oltrarno's San Niccolò district. Inside the stone-walled dining room, locals gather for chef Antonello Sardi's sophisticated creations, like mallard with green apple and foie gras. borgointhecity.com. **\$\$\$\$**

SUD

On the first floor of the Mercato Centrale, this lively pizzeria

serves sensational Neapolitan pies. Go for the Toscano, topped with sausage and roasted red pepper. osteriacaffeitaliano.com. **\$\$**

SESTO ON ARNO

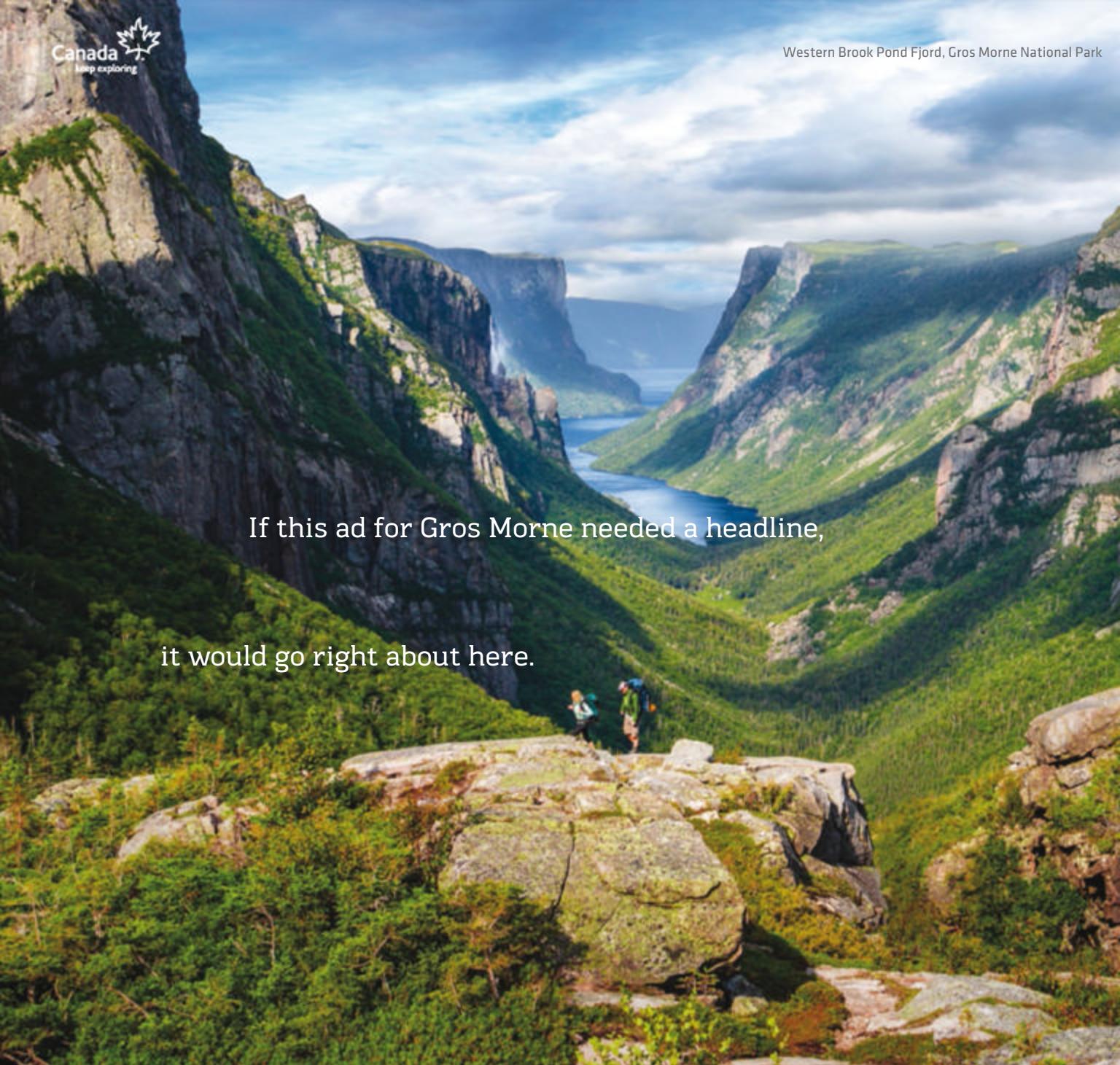
In a glass cube on the rooftop of the historic Hotel Westin Excelsior, the buzzy Sesto is run by TV chef Entiana Osmenzeza. Among her inventive Balkan- and Armenian-inflected dishes: charcoal-grilled scallops with pumpkin and orange. sesto.onarno.com. **\$\$\$\$**

AMBLÉ

"Fresh food and old furniture" is the motto at this bohemian café off the Ponte Vecchio, which doubles as a vintage design shop. On the menu: a selection of *tramezzini* filled with local ingredients like *sbriciolona* (fennel-flavored salami) and white asparagus. amble.it. **\$**

OBICÀ

You would never guess that this mozzarella bar is part of a chain across Italy and the United States. Its location, in the Palazzo Tornabuoni, is unbeatable, and the kitchen turns out some of the best cheeses in town. Snag a table in the courtyard and order the smoked mozzarella paired with pink Tuscan mortadella. obica.com. **\$\$**



If this ad for Gros Morne needed a headline,

it would go right about here.

Considering it took 485,000,000 years to create, it's hardly surprising what you'll find here. Not the least of which is perspective. It tends to happen when you're standing on the edge of a glacier-carved fjord. A vantage point that could only exist for the view itself, and the inescapable feeling that some things really don't need to be said. **To find your way to this edge of Canada, call Ryan at 1-800-563-6353 or visit NewfoundlandLabrador.com**

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Local Take

Three insiders share their favorite places in the city.



UMBERTO MONTANO
Restaurateur

"For no-frills Tuscan food, I go to **Trattoria Sostanza** (25 Via del Porcellana; 39-055/212-691; \$\$), in Santa Maria Novella. The artichoke-and-egg fritter grilled over charcoal is excellent. There's also the elegant **Alle Murate** ([allemurate.it](http:// allemurate.it); \$\$\$), which I own, in a gorgeous palazzo with 14th-century frescoes. Try the *bistecca alla fiorentina*. In the evening, there's no better place for an *aperitivo* than **Rivalta Cafè** (rivaltacafe.it), where you can sip martinis while watching the sun set over the Arno."

Culinary Academy

Three cooking schools that teach the Tuscan way.

Cucina Lorenzo de' Medici At this high-tech kitchen, you can sign up for a themed lesson (pizza making, say) or simply watch a master chef prepare a meal. cucinaldm.com.

Desinare at Riccardo Barthel Up to 10 students gather daily at Riccardo Barthel's interior design emporium to learn about everything from wine pairings to food photography. desinare.it.

MaMa Tuscany's top chefs lead the classes at MaMa, on the outskirts of Oltrarno. Perfect your ravioli or discover the secret ingredients in osso buco. mamaflorence.com.



From left: The patio at Libreria Brac; hats from Grevi; enjoying a plate of salumi at Trattoria Sostanza.



TOMMASO MELANI
Co-owner of boutiques Stefano Bemer and Scuola del Cuoio



"Oltrarno has great one-off shops. At **Alessandro Dari** (alessandrodari.com), you'll find pieces like gold-and-diamond rings inspired by angels. Nearby, perfumer **Lorenzo Villoresi** (lorenzovilloresi.it) blends bespoke scents from hundreds of ingredients. Across the river, I love the tailored suits at **Liverano & Liverano** (liverano.com), and the wool *coppola* caps from **Grevi** (grevi.it) are ideal for when the weather turns chilly."



FRANZISKA NORI
Director at Strozziina gallery

"Florence's contemporary art scene is small but worth exploring. **Biagiotti Progetto Arte** (biagiotti.com) displays emerging Italian artists like Andrea Facco, and **Galleria il Ponte** (galleria ilponte.com) carries a range of international 20th- and 21st-century talents. For a coffee break, **Libreria Brac** (libriibrac.net) has a wonderful café that's packed with design books. At **Castello di Ama** (castellodiamma.com), an hour's drive south, you can see works by Kendell Geers and Anish Kapoor."



CANCÚN

This past November, fourteen travel specialists kicked off the inaugural Travel Academy program hosted by **Mexico Tourism Board** and **Grupo Posadas**. The group of travel influentials came together at **Live Aqua Cancún**, courtesy of **Aeroméxico**, where they were joined by executives from leading hotels and destinations for in-depth discussions about the current state of the travel industry. The group enjoyed a day trip to Isla Mujeres and then traveled to Rosewood Mayakoba for a private dinner.



Jay Meyer, Clara Sedlak, Travel + Leisure;
Gerardo Llanes, Mexico Tourism Board

TRAVEL+LEISURE
MEXICO
TRAVEL ACADEMY


Live Aqua Cancún



The group enjoyed a visit to Ek' Balam

YUCATÁN

Yucatán Tourism Board hosted part two of the adventure, bringing the group to historic Mérida, where they stayed in some of the city's best boutique hotels and haciendas. The advisors visited the city of Valladolid and the Cenote Xcanché y Zona Arqueológica de Ek' Balam. The two-day visit ended with a tour of the Gran Museo del Mundo Maya, followed by a farewell reception at Rosas & Xocolate.



Pablo Glogovsky, Travel + Leisure; Carol Kolozs, Rosas & Xocolate; Penelope Bonaldi, Travel + Leisure; Santiago González, Yucatán Tourism Board



Roundtable luncheon at Hacienda Xcanatún



Penny Brewer, Café Royal; Nathan Lump,
Travel + Leisure; Jackie McDevitt, Café Royal

TOAST OF THE TOWN

Guests from around the world gathered for a welcome toast to Travel + Leisure Editor Nathan Lump on November 3 at The Savoy Hotel in London. Guests sipped on "shaken not stirred" cocktails exclusive to the Fairmont, Raffles and Swissôtel brands.



Geoffrey Gelardi, The Lanesborough London;
Filip Boyen, Belmond Hotels



Agapi Sbokou, Blue Palace, Resort & Spa;
Nathan Lump, Travel + Leisure; Kalia
Konstantinidou, Vedema Resort Santorini;
Jacqui Gifford, Travel + Leisure



(Continued from page 145)

was delicate, frustrating work, like threading a needle covered in sap. It'll be six months before the beans can be harvested, and another year before they will be ready to use.

Healy was leading us on a farm tour, one of Laucala's most popular activities. The island grows 40 different vegetables (including beets, taro, okra, and eggplant), 15 fruits (pineapple, guava, gooseberries, soursop), countless herbs, hydroponic lettuces and microgreens, even coffee, tea, and sugarcane. All of them are under organic cultivation.

Farther south is the livestock farm, whose Sulmtaler chickens—brought in from Austria—lay eggs with yolks as vibrant as an orange dove's feathers. The Wagyu herd now numbers nine, up from the original four bought in 2013 for \$150,000. The cattle graze in the lushest pasture you can imagine, under incongruous stands of coconut palms. (While Laucala's ambition for food sustainability is undeniably impressive, the resort is not exactly a green operation: it burns through more than three tons of shipped-in oil per day.)

From the paddocks we circled around the south coast, bouncing down a dirt track through ever-thickening jungle. This was the untouched side of the island. Two wild goats scampered off into the woods, and Healy briefly considered giving chase. "My crew likes to catch them and make goat curry," he said, hungrily. Healy pointed to the reef just offshore, where he and his chefs had gone free diving the day before. They'd brought up a dozen lobsters, which would be on the dinner menu that night.

THE FOOD IS A HIGH POINT. I loved the fresh-caught tuna sashimi at Beach Bar, breakfasts of silky congee and those golden-yolked eggs, and the quasi-secret, six-seat teppanyaki restaurant that clings to a cliffside above the sea. All five restaurants really do stay open every night, even when only one couple is in residence. Guests can also dine in their villas, and some do so for every meal. But we kept returning to Seagrass, Laucala's Thai restaurant, run by chef Piak Sussadeewong, formerly of the Mandarin Oriental Bangkok. Piak's prawn salad with palm hearts and fiery *gai toey* (fried chicken with pandanus leaves) were among the best renditions I've had.

Days at Laucala are spent snorkeling among the hawksbills, paddling the lagoons on an outrigger canoe, and game-fishing on the Riviera Flybridge yacht. There are hikes to nearby waterfalls and long rides along the beach on Laucala's resident Fijian horses, a sturdy crossbreed of Clydesdale and Australian Thoroughbred.

And if you want something more adventurous, there's always the submarine. The DeepFlight Super Falcon Submersible is more fighter jet than sub, in both looks and performance. It is 22 feet long and shaped like a *Star Wars* X-Wing—the pilot sits in front; you ride in back, like R2-D2. It can dive to 400 feet. It can barrel-roll. It can go six knots per hour, which isn't all that fast, but certainly feels so when you're flying—the only word for it—is through the ocean, darting among the coral like a high-precision drone.

For now, the Super Falcon is launched from shore using a beach-loader, and travels only inside the reef at an average depth of 25 feet. But Laucala is considering buying a new boat that could launch the sub in the water, allowing for excursions well beyond the reef—to the famous Great White Wall, for example, one of Fiji's top dive sites.

Given the scale of investment and the talent involved, it's no surprise that Laucala is incredibly well-conceived and well-run—though its understated style does come as a surprise. (At resorts with unlimited budgets, decorative restraint is rare.) I'd arrived expecting something absurdly over-the-top. I was prepared to be disoriented, if not outright put off, by the idea of so much being spent for the enjoyment of so few. That feeling did creep in on occasion, but Laucala mostly manages to come off as an entirely natural, almost normal undertaking. (Even the fine-dining restaurant, with its \$100-a-piece Robbe & Berking flatware, feels unassuming and relaxed.) This is, in essence, a place where the über-rich can go to pretend money doesn't matter, all while spending massive amounts of it. They can believe they're invited houseguests on the proverbial island of the lotus-eaters, residents of a sovereign principality governed only by the rule of Yes.

The question of whether Laucala turns a profit (currently a definite no) is for now of little consequence, one manager told me—and why would it be? Even beyond his \$7 billion net worth, Mateschitz has no board of directors to answer to, no brand managers to appease, and no reason not to indulge every whim and desire. In that respect, he's the embodiment of his resort's clientele. For jaded plutocrats, Laucala provides a sure-fire cure for ennui. For the rest of us, it offers an anthropology lesson in what the super-wealthy seek now: extreme privacy, unbridled freedom, and an outwardly wholesome breed of luxury, couched in notions of eco-friendliness and sustainability (while not entirely adhering to either).

"What we're trying to achieve here doesn't follow any recognized business plan," Thomson told me, perhaps stating the obvious. When Thomson took the reins last January, he was constantly asking himself, *How on earth does this work?* "And there's no real answer to that," he added, "except that this is Mateschitz's home, and he's extremely keen to see it get better and better."

Mateschitz, who lives primarily in Austria, spends only about a month per year at Laucala. But the rest of the time he's still a constant presence around the resort, his name invoked in whispers by employees and guests alike: this reclusive, Hearst-like figure with his toy Fijian island. Of course Laucala is much more than Mateschitz's toy. It's clearly his passion project—a series of grand experiments in agriculture, design, self-sufficiency, and logistics, and one its patron might very well keep pursuing even if all his guests were to someday up and leave. In the meantime, for those who can afford it, the club is open. • laucala.com; all-inclusive. \$\$\$\$\$

Peter Jon Lindberg is Travel + Leisure's editor-at-large.



► CaymanKindness Children's Book Reading Event Series

Travel + Leisure partnered with Cayman Islands to promote Caymankind, the unique caring culture of the island, through a children's book reading series with author Jim Ritterhoff. Families enjoyed a reading of *Tuke the Specialist Turtle*, a presentation on marine conservation, and fun crafts. Two events took place in October at Books & Books in Bal Harbour and Coral Gables, FL, and another held in December at Anderson's Book Shop in Larchmont, NY. The book proceeds went toward preserving Cayman's coral reef.



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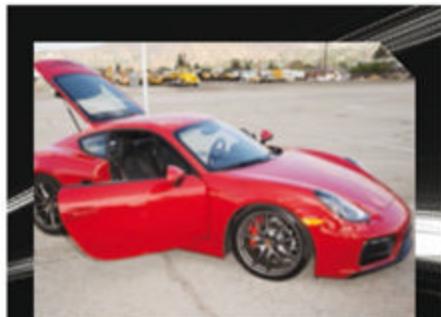


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Travel + Leisure and Porsche hosted an exclusive ride-and-drive event on November 15 at Bob Hope Airport in Burbank, CA. An intimate group of T+L readers received the opportunity to test-drive Porsche's latest vehicles, followed by a series of luxury experiences inside a private hangar: culinary demonstrations by roomforty, a Sans Lieges wine tasting, a special presentation on Porsche Design's timepiece collection and a tour of JetSuite's Phenom 100.

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Just a few blocks from the Plaza de Armas is the small, comprehensive Museo de la Coca. Inside are various works of art in praise of the leaf, including a painting of the Blessed Virgin holding three leaves aloft, a sly smile on her face. There is a large panel describing the nutritional properties of the plant—its high levels of protein, vitamin C, potassium, beta-carotene, and calcium, as well as its benefits for pregnancy. Up on the second floor are clear instructions on the intricate process of creating cocaine from the leaves. And finally there is a room depicting the evils of the drug, with photographs of its victims—the singer Amy Winehouse (who actually died of alcohol poisoning), soccer superstar Diego Maradona—and a mannequin sprawled lifelessly on a bed with a needle sticking out of its arm and a toe tag dangling from its foot.

In the museum's small gift shop, Angela Rodriguez is brewing a pot of *maté de coca*. "In its natural state, it is pure and for health," she promises me. Rodriguez is a typically small, middle-aged Peruvian woman with a warm, open face and an easy smile—the furthest-looking thing from a coke fiend. "Only because people use it the wrong way does it have a bad reputation. Any product mixed with chemicals becomes a drug. It is one of the reasons the museum is here, to help people to understand."

The shop sells all things coca: cookies, toffee, energy bars, and endless assortments of teas as well as loose leaves. "All the farmers in the fields are chewing. It gives them energy, and keeps them from getting hungry," Rodriguez smiles. "I chew every day," she tells me—and she certainly seems very happy.

As I am taking my leave, she has one final point to make. "It is safe to say that without the aid of the coca plant, Machu Picchu could never have been built."

This statement isn't surprising given that sooner or later, nearly every conversation I have in Cuzco turns to

Machu Picchu. It is impossible to overstate the effect the ancient Incan site has had on the city.

Built in the mid 15th century, "discovered" by Hiram Bingham in 1911, accorded World Heritage status by UNESCO in 1983, Machu Picchu has become a must on many a bucket list. To get an idea of the ever-growing import of the Incan ruins, a few numbers are helpful. In 1992, only 9,000 tourists made the trip to Machu Picchu. In fewer than 20 years, that number had swelled to more than 850,000 annually.

When the Urubamba River flooded in 2010 and washed away the railroad tracks, access to the mountaintop was cut off. Machu Picchu closed for more than two months and, according to the ministry of tourism, Peru lost \$200 million in revenue. Cuzco was hit hardest.

"Everyone realized how dependent we are," Unda Cano tells me as we walk across the Plaza de Armas. "Restaurants, hotels, everything closed."

Perhaps I was naïve in thinking that I could return to Cuzco and skip what many consider South America's greatest draw, but then I didn't fully understand how linked the two cities have become—how in death one has given life to the other. To truly experience Cuzco today, I also had to see Machu Picchu. This time I do it in style.

The Belmond *Hiram Bingham* train pampers a few dozen passengers in two Pullman-style cars done up in 1920s décor. The train slowly winds 68 miles through the Sacred Valley, passing through rolling plains, descending into Pomatales Gorge beside a roiling river, chugging through the town of Ollantaytambo (with its own vast Incan ruins), past the hanging glacier on Mount Veronica, before the ecosystem changes from Andean highland to jungle and cloud forest.

The journey is undeniably posh; the arrival is anything but. Aguas Calientes is the kind of ragged, opportunistic village that springs up to capitalize on a nearby tourist destination. The quicker dispensed with the better. Machu Picchu sits on

the saddle ridge atop jarringly steep mountains, a half-hour bus ride up scores of switchbacks. Even on a repeat visit, the first glimpse induces head shaking. *How did they do it? How did they even think of it?*

Similarly goofy and unanswerable questions come to my mind often during the two days I spend at the site. There are countless stories and theories about the Incas and why they built Machu Picchu. Who lived here? Why? Was it really a sanctuary for virgins? (No, it doesn't seem so.)

The experience lodged so deep in my psyche during that first trip 20 years earlier that the white granite ruins feel deeply familiar—if much more crowded. I revisit the Hitching Post of the Sun, hike to the top of the terraced agriculture sector to the Watchman's Hut, and hunt out the Temple of the Three Windows. Over the years—and even while at the site—I have heard so many theories as to why Machu Picchu existed (to determine winter or summer solstice, for astronomical readings, to house precious gems). At some point I leave my active mind alone and simply wander, letting Machu Picchu wash over me.

New rules are being introduced that will restrict independent movement throughout the citadel, but I find more than one empty corner and sit alone as mist descends and lifts. Hummingbirds zip past. Orchids grow wild and sway in the breeze. A hiker is visible high up on Huayna Picchu. Eventually I make my way toward the exit, then decide to sit just one last time.

That's when the older Peruvian woman elbows me in the ribs. It's then that I turn to take her in, and look off in the direction she indicates—to the mix of mist and clouds and rain and sun. We watch together and when she finally rises to leave, we nod farewell. I sit awhile longer, looking out. A falcon circles high above. I follow his improvised course, only the tips of his wings adjusting in the breeze. Then he swoops and dives, banks hard to the southeast, and is gone over the next peak—toward Cuzco. +

Buyer's Guide



RADAR: STYLE

PAGE 48

Mark Cross (Hirshleifers, 2080 Northern Blvd., Manhasset, N.Y.; 516/627-3566; nordstrom.com); **Burberry Prorsum** (877/217-4085; burberry.com); **Reed Krakoff** (212/988-0560; reedkrakoff.com); **Bulgari** (Bulgari, 730 Fifth Ave., N.Y.C.; 212/315-9000; bulgari.com); **Jimmy Choo** (Jimmy Choo stores; 866/524-6687; jimmychoo.com).

RADAR: GOODS

PAGE 58

Dr. Scholl's (drscholls.com); **Marc Jacobs** (Marc Jacobs stores; 877/707-6272; marcjacobs.com).

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*Starting price for a standard double in March; for resorts, rates indicate the starting price in high season. †Price for a three-course dinner for two, excluding drinks.

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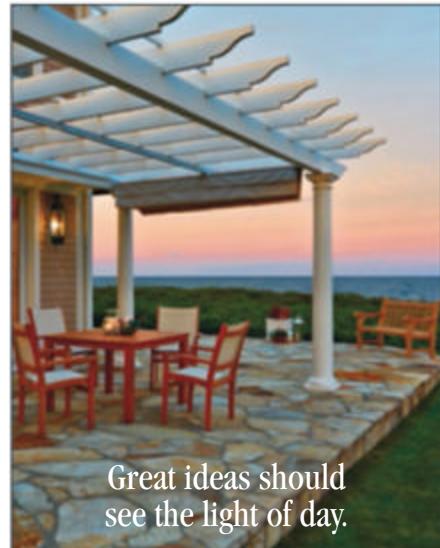
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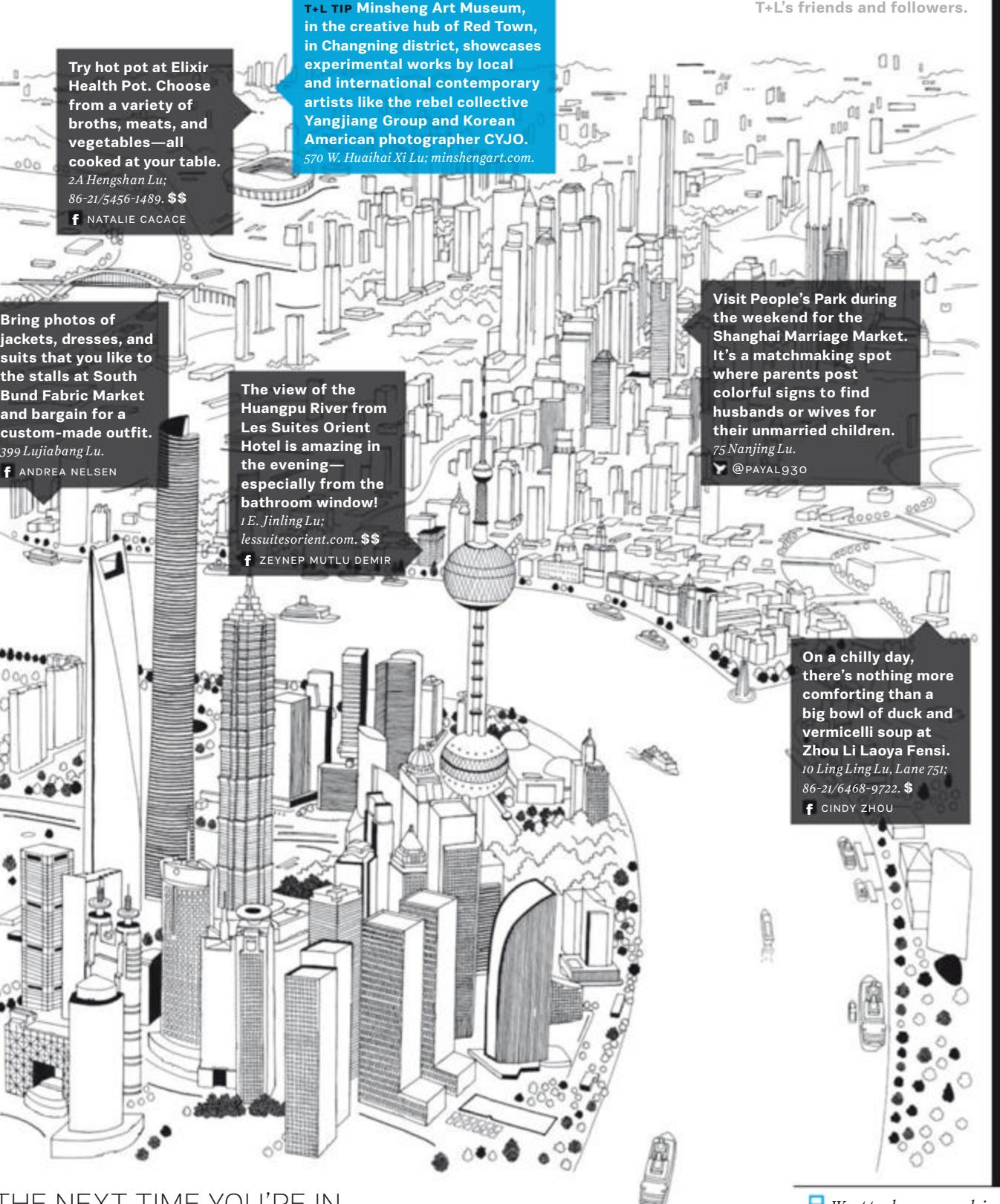


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f NATALIE CACACE

T+L TIP Minsheng Art Museum, in the creative hub of Red Town, in Changning district, showcases experimental works by local and international contemporary artists like the rebel collective Yangjiang Group and Korean American photographer CYJO. 570 W. Huaihai Xi Lu; minshengart.com.

Bring photos of jackets, dresses, and suits that you like to the stalls at South Bund Fabric Market and bargain for a custom-made outfit. 399 Lujiazhang Lu.

f ANDREA NELSEN

The view of the Huangpu River from Les Suites Orient Hotel is amazing in the evening—especially from the bathroom window!

1E. Jinling Lu;
lessuitesorient.com. \$\$

f ZEYNEP MUTLU DEMIR

Tips from the true travel pros:
T+L's friends and followers.

Visit People's Park during the weekend for the Shanghai Marriage Market. It's a matchmaking spot where parents post colorful signs to find husbands or wives for their unmarried children. 75 Nanjing Lu.

v @PAYAL930

On a chilly day, there's nothing more comforting than a big bowl of duck and vermicelli soup at Zhou Li Laoya Fensi. 10 Ling Ling Lu, Lane 751;

86-21/6468-9722. \$

f CINDY ZHOU

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